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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Shakespeare's Politics: Troilus and Cressida

BY

(C)

Keith Arthur Morgan

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Political Science

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

SPRING 1987

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For all the value that the true, the truthful, the selfless may deserve, it would still be possible that a higher and more fundamental value for life might have to be ascribed to deception, selfishness, and lust. It might even be possible that what constitutes the value of these good and revered things is precisely that they are insidiously related, tied to and involved with these wicked, seemingly opposite things - maybe even one with them in essence. Maybe!

Friedrich Nietzsche

Here's a good world the while! Who is so gross
That cannot see this palpable device?
Yet who is so bold that says he sees it not?
Bad is the world and will come to nought
When such ill dealing must be seen in thought.

Richard III

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled:

Shakespeare's Politics:

Troilus and Cressida

submitted by: Keith Morgan

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of:

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For Lois

ABSTRACT

The plays of William Shakespeare are fittingly regarded as supreme examples of poetic genius. All too often, however, we fail to remember that his plays address the universal human topics. One of these topics is politics and the following discussion proceeds from the conviction that Shakespeare's plays contain a wisdom regarding political things that is commensurate with the charms of his poetry. Through a consideration of Troilus and Cressida, one of his least revered, yet most philosophic plays, the foundations of this political wisdom is examined. Although overtly concerned with the demands of love and war, Troilus and Cressida dramatizes the relation between honour and reason; and between political authority and individual pride in what becomes a searing examination of the sources of both love and war.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To communicate a fraction of Shakespeare's wisdom is a daunting process. If I have managed to do so, it is due in no small part to my friends and teachers (A distinction that has happily blurred). Darcy Wudel first persuaded me to the fitness of the subject, Stuart Munro continued his encouragement even when several thousand miles away, and Laura Moskuwich bore both my elations and confusions with confident equanimity. She is responsible, in ways she might not realize, for what is virtuous in these pages. Prof. Gary Watson of the Department of English patiently encouraged me when I became mired with concerns about the inter-disciplinary approach to Shakespeare. His cooperation reflects the highest ideals of a university. My adviser and teacher, Prof. Leon Craig, guided me with both wisdom and patience. I am grateful for the experience.

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INTRODUCTION: Poetry, Politics, and Philosophy

That the relationship of poetry and philosophy to political life is one of the oldest questions of our tradition is evident from a consideration of Plato's Republic. A significant portion of that dialogue is given over to first, the problem of poetry and the political education, later, to the place of poetry in the newly founded city in speech, and, finally, poets as sources of wisdom. In the earlier part of the dialogue (Books II and III) Socrates and his interlocuters discussed the pernicious effects that an unpurified poetry, with its attendant descriptions of base actions, would have on citizens. The charge is made that the poets, by depicting the gods and heroes as engaged in base activities, hold up unworthy models for emulation. Hence, the conclusion that "we must supervise the makers of tales."[1] This early discussion illustrates the necessity of moral tales for education, and their importance in the cultivation of civic virtue. Socrates thus affirms the place of a certain kind of poetry in the regime; however, when the place of poetry in the best regime, the regime dedicated to wisdom and virtue is discussed, the most pleasing poets are banished completely. But a reflective reading reveals that Plato had a very great respect for poetry, evidenced especially by the Symposium, while in the Republic he repeatedly refers to the charms of poetry. When Socrates says that "there is an old quarrel between philosophy and poetry", we can infer that the amount of time devoted to establishing the reasons why poetry needs supervision indicates that Plato thought poetry to be a worthy antagonist for philosophy.[2]

For Plato to supplant Homer as the teacher of the Greeks, he would have to present an account of the human things superior to that of Homer. However, we do not know that Homer intended to present the truth about human beings. As Plato well knew, poetry exerts a strong attraction upon human beings, but poetry, unlike philosophy, need not be concerned with the truth.[3] This is the essence of the Socratic critique: poetry being preoccupied with appearances and with pleasing its audience, is in effect at least twice removed from the truth. Consequently, when a poet writes his "fiction", he is imposing his own standards upon the situation he is writing about: he may attempt fidelity to the truth - but the very structure of a "fiction" implies a complex truth.

Despite this complexity, however, the truth of poetry can remain; for example, history is generally thought of as presenting a true account of past events but, as Aristotle admitted, "poetry is something more philosophic and of graver import than history . . . "[4] This is due to the fact that, for Aristotle, history is concerned with particular events. As he elaborates: "A history has to deal not with one action, but with one period and all that happened in that to one or more persons, however disconnected the several events may have been."[5] Thus Aristotle thinks that poetry approaches the realm of the philosophic from a concern with universals.

Whether this is true or not, and one may think specifically of the introduction to Herodotus and the organization of Thucydides for apparent counterexamples, the fact remains that both Plato and Aristotle recognized the powerful attractions of poetry. If anyone today even considers this "ancient quarrel" to be worth thinking about, he is probably inclined to

think of it as having been resolved in favor of poetry. Proof of this may be found in the assertion that much modern philosophy is itself regarded as no more than a species of poetry, insofar as it is regarded as more than a reflection of its author's creativity.[6] This development would not be so disturbing if poetry had become more philosophic. But there is little evidence that this has happened. Modern literature is often criticized as having lost touch with its moral dimensions, as having succumbed to a fundamental incoherence.[7] This incoherence can be rightly understood as a manifestation of that perennial philosophical problem - nihilism. Nihilism by its nature cannot speak of the good, and any poetry or philosophy that cannot speak of the good is reduced to silence with respect to everything important.

This predicament is exacerbated by the decline of philosophy; we are left with poetic philosophers but no philosophical poets. Once there were such men; Homer, Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, and Goethe are prominent examples. But the triumph of logical positivism, historicism, and moral relativism has affected the moral climate of the western world so pervasively that today our poets, if they retain some sensitivity to the plight of modern man, are silenced by the vehemence of critics who reject morally centred works as mere polemics, or as voices crying in the wilderness.

The sterility of so much modern philosophy and literature is also relected in our current views on the nature and status of politics. Developments in modern philosophy have affected not only literature, but since art imitates life, our ideas of politics and thus our political practice. Yet there remains in the works of the greatest philosopher-poets an

awareness of that tension between philosophy, politics, and art first explicated by Plato in the Republic.

A comparison of the foundations of poetical wisdom with those of philosophic wisdom can illuminate something important about the human condition. In regard to political life especially, the comparisions can be fruitful. These distinctions are most efficacious in the consideration of the universal human topics. One of these topics is politics: when the surface of poetry is political it presupposes public action. Political philosophy, defined as "that branch of philosophy that is closest to political life, to non-philosophic life, to human life," is the attempt to replace opinion about the nature of political things by knowledge of the nature of political things.[8] Hence to understand the philosophical-poet, to comprehend his wisdom, we must consider his opinions on the political things. To leave these matters unexamined has profound consequences, as Stanley Rosen has noted:

> Every opinion, including those of the philosopher, is defective to the degree or another. Every man, including the philosopher, is fundamentally a cave-dweller, a resident of the domain of opinion. We escape only intermittently from that domain, and only by a scrupulous awareness of the nature of opinion.[9]

—Presuming all men are subject to this tyranny of opinion, and that only the most prodigious efforts can free men from these bonds, then all this is true the poets as well. And if the effort to replace opinion with knowledge is - by definition - philosophy, then only a philosophic poet is a fit teacher of men. One of the greatest philosopher-poets was William Shakespeare, a man whose works might still have something to teach the modern world about politics.

Shakespeare and Political Philosophy

William Shakespeare is acknowledged as the greatest English speaking dramatist. His dramatic corpus contains plays of complexity and subtlety, enduring testaments to both his genius and the perennial problems that are the lot of human beings. His greatest tragedies dramatize ethical struggles, and in the most magnificent language illustrate the reasons why his protagonists would choose as they do. As has been observed by many readers of the plays, the greater part of the action takes place in public situations.[10] The internal or external struggles of the hero or heroine occur within the orbit of a political world.

Yet it is possible that even though a major part of the Shakespearian corpus deals with political matters, that is, with the life of public men, and men in public, Shakespeare has subordinated any truth about the nature of political life to the requirements of his dramaturgy. Rousseau, echoing Plato, was emphatic in his teaching that the theatre is a form of amusement that can play a decisive role in the formation of character. Bad plays aid in the formation of bad character just as good ones can shape virtuous character. More important, for Rousseau, was the problem of the dependence of dramatic authors on their audiences for the style and subject matter of their work.[11] As Allan Bloom has interpreted Rousseau:

> This constitutes the major difference between the thinker and the dramatist, the thinker states the truth as he sees it and is indifferent whether anybody reads him or agrees with him, while the dramatist must appeal to the dominant concerns of the people at large no matter what those concerns might be.[12]

Rousseau analyzes how Moliere's Misanthrope ridicules the virtuous man and praises the moral relativism of the base man. Shakespeare, however, is concerned with moral problems, and to elaborate those concerns he chose the stage that exemplified moral conflict, the political stage. In this choice Shakespeare sides with antiquity rather than modernity. The modern political teaching that would supplant the classical view of political life was clearly articulated, less than forty years after Shakespeare's death, in Hobbes' Leviathan. Hobbes taught that man was not a political and social animal, as both Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas had affirmed. Hobbes believed that man was motivated only by a desire for power and a fear of violent death.

This characterization of man and of political life does not lend itself to the heroic dimension. It poetry were to imitate the Hobbesian man, the man of the self-regarding passions, then those noble passions and virtues, which the ancients considered the soul of the good polis, could never be portrayed. Shakespeare hearkens back to this classical world; the importance of such authors as Ovid, Seneca, and Plutarch to his work is well documented. In the great tragedies, the Shakespearian stage becomes the setting for the restatement of the classical problems, especially that of the noble political life. In contrast, the Shakespearean comedies often present what may be understood as the problems of modern political life (as in The Merchant of Venice).

Yet the question of Shakespeare's moral sense remains an open question. To put it in concrete terms, we cannot know for certain whether Rousseau would have banned Shakespeare from Geneva had he

been in charge. As for Plato, one eminent Shakespearian scholar has written that "Shakespeare is just the poet whom Plato would banish from the ideal republic and Aristotle would attempt to reprieve. No personal animus underlies this contention . . . . Morality is the stock in trade of a Shakespeare and a Plato alike, but they conduct rival stalls."[13] This statement is problematic, for the idea of rival moralities seems contradictory. A morality is either moral or it is not. It matters little whether such morality belongs to a philosopher or a poet; the critiques of both Plato and Rousseau are based on the immorality of art. The truth of Shakespeare's moral sense can, however, only be tested by an extended examination of all the plays. To understand and interpret the plays it is crucial to recover the source of this quarrel in its classical beginnings and not is some modern conception of politics. A subsequent comparison of Shakespeare's political understanding to both the ancient and modern conceptions of politics will help to place him more accurately within the tradition of political thought.

The Strange History of Troilus and Cressida

Troilus and Cressida begins Shakespeare's chronicle of Western civilization; it takes as its source the story of the siege of Troy, in which the secular beginning of Western literature is found. The plays will span the rise and fall of Rome, both as Republic and Empire. They will explore the earliest days of Britain and continue down to the reign of Henry VIII. To these will be added tales of the Venetian republic, as well as comedies set in many ages and lands, including imaginary ones. Yet while Troilus and Cressida is Shakespeare's recounting of the events of the Trojan War,

for a reader whose knowledge of that legendary struggle has been shaped by the Iliad of Homer, it is a strangely enigmatic play.

This impression is not present merely in the comparison to Homer; it is present as well in comparison with the rest of the Shakespearian corpus. The bitter and deflating account of the war, the pomposity and even vulgarity of the major characters have been noticed by most readers. In its bleak vision, Troilus and Cressida seem only akin to Timon of Athens. Yet, major twentieth-century statements on it have repeatedly focussed on the "philosophic" and "modern" dimensions of the play.[14] Indeed, the definition of the play as modern encapsulates one of the enigmas surrounding it. Troilus and Cressida was virtually ignored for almost three hundred years after its composition. It has no record of performance in English until 1907, and even then it was castigated, the critic from the Times concluding that it was "better left unacted."[15]

A survey of the critical literature surrounding the play often does little more than confirm Swinburne's elegant judgement regarding its "palpable perplexities."[16] If critics have been divided about the meaning of the play and its relation to the rest of Shakespeare's work, they have also been divided over how to even classify the play. When the play was first printed in the Quarto edition of 1609, it bore the title of The Historie of Troylus and Cresseida. A hint of the confusion that was later to surround the play can be found in the prefatory epistle that was added to the second quarto edition. There the play is described as the most "witty" of the author's "comedies."[17] Fourteen years later, in the Folio edition of 1623, this confusion was further compounded when the play was entitled The Tragedie of Troylus and Cressida. Thus this one play has

run the gamut of all the standard classifications of Shakespeare's plays. While these variations might be dismissed as but the results of an age of embryonic criticism, it is interesting that re-evaluations of the play's genre have continued up to the present day.[18] If the play was ignored or castigated in the three hundred years following its appearance, in the twentieth century it has undergone a virtual rebirth. It has been staged at all the major festivals and, has become the subject of serious and extended critical interpretation.

Despite this new-found popularity, however, this history raises some puzzling questions. One immediate, although external, question is the mystery of the play's reception: why was it all but universally ignored for three hundred years? And what is it that causes the play to now be defined as peculiarly "modern"? It is at once obvious that since the play is about war, and that this century is generally conceded to be the bloodiest in the history of mankind, then there might be some special appeal in its understanding of warfare. Is this why the play could be disregarded for three hundred years; that these centuries, unlike our own, had no experience of total war, and consequently, no connection to Shakespeare's vision with respect to this subject.

This is an attractive thought but it ignores the fact that these centuries, while blissfully unaware of the concepts of blitzkrieg, fire-bombing, genocide, and nuclear deterrance, were not exactly peaceful. One need only recall the American Civil War, or the campaigns against Napoleon, in which the slaughter was horrendous. Perhaps, then the claim to modernity on this basis is unjustified. If so, then what about the

claim of its being "philosophical"? Now, some writers, most notably Eliot and Kermode, have denied Shakespeare the status of philosophical poet;[19] yet many other, and perhaps equally respectable, critics have deemed this play to be philosophic. Indeed, if Troilus and Cressida has been justly called Shakespeare's most philosophical play, it becomes an especially appropriate vehicle for our investigations into the relations of poetry, philosophy, and politics. If it has also been called enigmatic, then might we not see these two descriptions as complementary? For philosophy is often enigmatic, while enigmas are often provocations to philosophy. This much is clear in a comment of Erasmus:

> Allegory not infrequently results in enigma. Nor will that be unfortunate, if you are speaking to the learned, or if you are writing . . . . For things should not be so written that everyone perceives, but rather so that they are compelled to investigate certain things and learn.[20]

Indeed, since the "philosophy" is so apparent, we might pay heed to Eramus' comment and wonder if the surface is all there is to this play. As John Vyvyan has noted:

> The Renaissance was an age of mysterious philosophies; and it delighted to express them in a veiled way, so that they should be published and not published . . . . At least it would be unwise to assume, in studying Shakespeare, that what shows on the surface is all he intends.[21]

The discussions of value, of appearance and reality, of the transient nature of fame, of the encroachment of time, all constitute parts of the overt philosophical preoccupations that animate Troilus and Cressida. Since no single interpretation can hope to definitively deal with all the implications of all the themes the play presents to us, and despite the fact that they all impinge on its action, the prudent course might be to explore one select general theme, and thereby see if there is more to Troilus and

Cressida than the surface.

The following argument is grounded on the idea that Shakespeare's public plays contain a teaching, very much in the tradition of political philosophy, concerning the perennial political problems. Consequently, what follows is an interpretation of Troilus and Cressida in light of the large and overarching theme of love and war. Specifically, it is an examination of the relations between men and women in the larger context of a war that began with one man's desire for another man's woman. Throughout Troilus and Cressida there is an explicit debate as to the necessity and justice of a war conducted over the possession of a woman. The love affair of Troilus and Cressida, which is played out among the scenes of battle and debate concerning Helen of Troy, is a microcosm of the larger conflict that rages between Greek and Trojan.

Love and war are two of the more enduring concerns of human beings, and their inter-relatedness can be seen in the countless proverbial observations about the "war between the sexes". Shakespeare's examination of this relationship throws special light, not only on the respective natures of men and women, but on the justification we give for both love and war.

The Prologue: Harbinger of Ambiguity

Troilus and Cressida begins with a prologue, a literary device rarely used by Shakespeare. There are only six prologues in the thirty-seven extant plays attributed to Shakespeare.[22] The traditional rationale for a prologue is to inform an auditor of events that have occured previous to

the action to be depicted, a prologue thereby sets the scene. In this light the prologue of Troilus and Cressida fulfills traditional expectations:

In Troy there lies the scene. From Isles of Greece
The princes orgulous, their high blood chafed,
Have to the port of Athens sent their ships,
Fraught with the ministers and instruments
Of cruel war. Sixty and nine that wore
Their crownets regal, from th' Athenian bay
Put forth toward Phrygia, and their vow is made
To ransack Troy within whose strong immures
The ravished Helen, Menelaus' queen,
With wanton Paris sleeps - and that's the quarrel.

(Prol. 1-10)

As many commentators have noted, the language of the Prologue is exceedingly emotive and ornate. Shakespeare is using words here that he had never used before and some that he will never use again. This stentorian manner is confirmed in the images evoked - "princes orgulous . . . . high blood . . . cruel war . . . . ransack . . . the ravished Helen" - all contributing to an underlining of the apparent theme of "cruel war."

The first ten lines have a coda, however, that deflates, even denigrates, the martial images: "and that's the quarrel." Quarrel is a rather light-weight word to describe the origins of a war. Shakespeare has here used the more neutral term to describe the response of the Greeks to the abduction of Helen; a response that is nonetheless exceedingly serious (cf. sixty-nine princes with their respective powers). It is important to remember, however, that this "quarrel" will not end amicably, the dispute settled and friendship restored, but in the total destruction of Troy - for Tudor England the emblematic representation of the ultimate secular disaster.

The next twelve lines continue the martial imagery with descriptions of the landing and encampment of the Greeks, as well as an enumeration of the defensive fortifications of Troy. Yet, after this, another unsettling mood is struck:

Now expectation, tickling skittish spirits
On one and other side, Trojan and Greek,
Sets all on hazard.

(Prol. 20 - 22)

To be at hazard is to be subject to the vagaries of chance, an impression that the prologue confirms in its next semantic shift, as it abruptly announces:

.....And hither am I come,
A Prologue armed, but not in confidence
Of author's pen or actor's voice, but suited
In like condition as our argument.

(Prol. 22 - 25)

The Prologue is here given form; he is dressed in armour, suited for war, as befits the theme or "argument" of the play. The martial theme is once again reiterated; but as quickly as it is delivered, we realize the ambiguous nature of the Prologue's declaration, for he comes "not in confidence of author's pen or actor's voice." Dressed for war yet avowing no confidence, this pessimistic assessment of the powers of pen and voice sends an immediate current of ambiguity over the forthcoming play. The audience, and most especially an Elizabethan audience, might reasonably be prepared for a recounting of the familiar legend of Troy, and of its similiarly doomed lovers. The Prologue, however, explicitly announces skepticism, and if this is not enough, then informs us that our opinions, whether of praise or blame are irrelevant:

Now like or find fault; do as your pleasures are:
Now good or bad, 'tis but the chance of war.

(Prol. 30 - 31)

From the dramatic diction that begins it, with its profusion of martial imagery, the prologue moves first to the curiously neutral term of "quarrel" and then, ~~after~~ resuming the martial theme, descends to pessimism, and finally, to dismissal. We might tenatively assume from this that Shakespeare expected to be misunderstood from the very beginning, the dismissal of the audience's reactions may indicate that Troilus and Cressida was more important to Shakespeare himself, that what he has written was not dictated by a wish to please, and that he believed the play's theme represents something intrinsically valuable, of such a value as to transcend such standard yardsticks as common praise or blame.

The conventional understanding of our tradition is that rhetoric is the speech that conveys praise or blame; this much is clear in the Rhetoric of Aristotle.[23] Shakespeare's plays are often regarded as rhetorical masterpieces, and in them one can sense the Tudor fascination with the possibilities of speech.[24] Marc Antony's funeral speech, Coriolanus' response to the plebs, Hermione to Leontes, and Henry V on the eve on Agincourt are but four examples of the consummate rhetorical skill of Shakespeare. Our tradition also acknowledges the relation between rhetoric and political life; indeed, this identification of rhetorical power and political life is what makes Shakespeare's plays so transparently political. They are filled with men and women who occupy a public world, and though they speak an elevated language, it is to articulate the concerns of authentic inhabitants of that world.

The art of politics, indeed the art of even "ideal" politics, requires the use of rhetoric; and the more noble the rhetoric, the more it tends to ennoble the polity. This idea can be discovered in Plato's Gorgias, which despite its critique of rhetoric also contains a defence of true rhetoric, of rhetoric employed for noble ends. This is apparent when Socrates states that he alone professes the true political art.[25] With such thoughts in mind, the question arises with respect to the prologue: what is its rhetorical purpose? In dismissing the relevance of his audience's response, in leaving it to the "chance" of war, Shakespeare suggests that the reaction of the audience is irrelevant. Is it not possible that he has dismissed the audience because he has thought the matter through so completely that he has realized that his inescapable conclusion is unpleasant?[26]

Since the author is always the first to reach the conclusions of his own work, it is plausible that a great and uncompromising artist might follow his thought through to the bitter end, that he might determine to stage the result no matter how unpopular it might be, and that he would dismiss those who would praise (for they had not really understood the import), or those who could censure (for they were rejecting the unpleasant truth). The Prologue, then, is our beginning to the play, setting a scene, filled with the images of war; it diverts, confuses, and then dismisses us. Even in its closing words, it reinforces the overt theme while continuing the idea of ambiguity, and in so doing, it serves as a cautionary signpost preparatory to a reading of the play itself.

Troilus: The Divided Man

It is a commonplace of Shakespearian criticism to stress the importance of the first scene.[27] We have paid due and proper attention to the Prologue for those same reasons: the description of the setting, the imparting of information, and the evocation of mood. The prologue and the epilogue are two of the enigmas of the play; and so, in other ways, is the first scene. Shakespeare begins by introducing Troilus, one of those for whom the play is named, who is a son of King Priam, brother of Hector, thus a prince of the royal house. The setting is somewhere within the walls of Troy. It is Troilus who gives us our first perspective on the war. In this initial scene he diagnoses the troubles that have caused him to order his servant to remove his armour and weapons:

> Call here my varlet, I'll unarm again.
> Why should I war without the walls of Troy
> That find such cruel battle here within?
> Each Trojan that is master of his heart,
> Let him to field - Troilus, alas, hath none.
>
> (1.1.1-5)

Troilus is a man in turmoil, a victim of an internal battle that is severe enough to keep him from the violent external battle that is, even now, raging about the walls of his city. The Prologue spoke of the "sons of Troy" being locked within the city upon the arrival of the Greeks. Troilus, who is surely a son of Troy, is not only locked up within the city, he is also locked up within himself. Unlike his fellow Trojans, he is not "master of his heart". He compares himself to his enemies:

The Greeks are strong, and skillful to their strength,
Fierce to their skill, and to their fierceness valiant;
But I am weaker than a woman's tear,
Tamer than sleep, fonder than ignorance,
Less valiant than the virgin in the night,
And skilless as unpractised infancy.

(7-12)

For Troilus, it is apparently the Greeks who possess the martial virtues requisite to the successful prosecution of the war. Troilus, in self-admission, thus falls far short of the typical portrait of the courageous warrior of classical antiquity. The Homeric Achilles, who is the archetype of the doubting warrior, never once doubted his courage, even while witholding that courage from Agamemnon. Indeed, Troilus' self-portrait falls far below how he is described by his enemy Ulysses in this same play (4.5.96-107). Although, as we shall see, there is good reason to doubt the literal truth of Ulysses' assessment, no one in the play - other than Troilus - ever doubts Troilus' courage. Indeed, in a play on war we might think that courage would be one of the most prominent virtues, yet here is the putative hero of the play denigrating his own courage in the first scene!

To be unable to master one's heart would seem to make one a slave to the passions, since mastery of the heart presumably means mastery of the passions. Such mastery is traditionally understood to be the accomplishment of reason. If this is true, then are the Trojan warriors masters through the control of their passions? Or is their fidelity to the Trojan cause an act of will? Such control, whether effected by will or by reason, implies a harmony between soul and body, a harmony that is, by self-admission, absent in Troilus. While it may be that the Trojan

warriors are simply less self-conscious than Troilus, it is clear that they are in the field while Troilus sits at home.

Yet there is no initial indication as to why Troilus has discarded his weapons, or why he thinks himself to have no heart. The reasons for Troilus' withdrawal are only given in the ensuing dialogue between Troilus and Pandarus. Their conversation makes clear that it is not the progress of the war that has disturbed Troilus; it is his lack of progress in a romantic quest. This is why Troilus is not in control of his passions. He has attempted to expedite the realization of his desires by enlisting the aid of Cressida's uncle Pandarus to his cause. The greater part of this scene is taken up with Troilus' sighing protestations of love and Pandarus' alternate counselling of patience intermingled with praise of Cressida's beauty. Their conversation is a lewd little dialogue, ostensibly associating the baking of a cake with the virtue of patience, but in essence it is a dialogue on seduction. Pandarus is coy with Troilus, leading him on with descriptions of Cressida's charms, and then impatiently refusing to help any further. Troilus, for his part, declares that he always thinks of Cressida, and then chastises himself when he realizes that he does not indeed think of her always.(30-31)

After Pandarus' petulant exit, an exasperated Troilus gives us another personal perspective on the war:

Peace you ungracious clamors! Peace, rude sounds!
Fools on both sides: Helen must needs be fair,
When with your blood you daily paint her thus.
I cannot fight upon this argument:
It is too starved a subject for my sword.

(87-91)

This is a most pessimistic outlook on the war. The sounds of war are "rude" and "ungracious", the fighters on both sides "fools". Then the most revealing comment on Helen, the celebrated cause of the war. This comment can be read two ways: Helen must be beautiful if you are willing to spill your blood for her; or alternatively, Helen's beauty is created by the spilling of your blood, that is, the value of her beauty increases with the ever-increasing quantities of blood spilled in the contention that surrounds her. This is the first allusion to the subject of value, and it is appropriate that it is uttered in regard to Helen since it is her value that will be debated in the fateful council scene of the next act. There Troilus will describe her as "a theme of honour and renown/A spur to valiant and magnanimous deeds" (2.2.198-9). But here the contention that surrounds Helen is "too starved a subject" for Troilus' sword (91). There is a marked contrast between the public and the private Troilus.

Our understanding of what moves Troilus begins with this initial scene. We discover that he is in love with Cressida and apparently weary of what must seem to be an perpetual war. We are told that Troilus is not yet twenty-three; and later, that the war has been going on for seven years. This means Troilus was about sixteen when the war began; hence, the war has been a part of both his adolescence and early maturity. He is also a man eager to consummate an affair with the object of his heart, an affair that he visualizes more in the language of commerce, than of romance;

Tell me Apollo, for thy Daphne's love,
What Cressid is, what Pandar, and what we?
Her bed is India; and there she lies, a pearl;
Between our Ilium and where she resides
Let it be called the wild and wand'ring flood;
Ourself the merchant, and this sailing Pandar
Our doubtful hope, our convoy, and our bark.

(96-102)

For Troilus, Cressid's bed is India, the exotic and unknown place. Troilus is no explorer; however, for he would rather engage the services of Pandarus, the middleman, to convey the pearl to the eager customer. The appeal to Apollo is also revealing, for one might suggest that the greatest, or at least the most striking, difference between this play and Homer's Iliad is the fact that the gods are absent in Shakespeare's Troy. They do not dignify the action with their presence, there is no active intervention and command. Yet Shakespeare's Greeks and Trojans do call upon the gods, even if there is no evidence for their existence.

Yet, by using this particular oath, Troilus reveals more about his romantic illusions than his piety. It was Daphne who resisted the love of Apollo, preferring to be turned into a laurel tree rather than submit to the god. Apollo, maddened by the intoxicating arrows of Cupid, laboured under the delusion that she loved him. It seems prophetic that Troilus calls upon Apollo, the god reputed to know the future, but who was himself blinded to the future in the case of Daphne. If a god in love cannot know the future of his love, then what hope has mortal man? Troilus seem either ignorant of, or unwilling, or unable to profit from the story of Apollo and Daphne. Ironically, the legend of Troy tells of one man who did profit from the advice of Apollo; Calchas, the father of Cressida, who was warned by the god of the ultimate defeat of Troy and fled to the Greeks.[28]

Troilus is eventually interrupted in his soul-searching by the arrival of Aeneas who asks him why he is not at the battlefield. Troilus' answer is direct but hardly explanatory: "Because not there." Troilus considers this answer appropriate; it is a "woman's answer" and thereby appropriate because it is "womanish to be from thence." We might ask what the implication of a "woman's answer" would be. This is a play concerned with the two most fundamental activities of human beings - love and war - and it is too easy to attend only to the warfare in the hope that this will explicate Shakespeare's political teaching. Yet is not this war immortal in human memory precisely because it was fought over a woman?

Troilus' answer denigrates his manhood by comparing his behavior to that of a woman. More importantly, by inference his answer throws doubt on the rationality of women. A "woman's answer" is simply "because"; no reason is offered, the fatalistic - or is it willful? - answer is itself sufficient. Troilus' musings do cause him to remember the war, for he asks Aeneas for news from the field. Aeneas tells him that Paris has been wounded by Menelaus. Troilus apparently recognizes the poetic justice of the cuckhold wounding the cuckholder, for he replies: "Let Paris bleed; tis but scar to scorn/Paris is gored with Menelaus' horn."(109-10)

The reoccuring sounds of battle cause Aeneas to comment on what he calls the "good sport" to be found there, and in this Troilus apparently concurs, for he puts aside his longings for love and accompanies Aeneas to the field. He does not leave, however, without uttering his wish that some "good sport" were to be found within the walls of Troy and not outside on the battlefield. Thus, even as he leaves for the battle, Troilus considers the sportful idea of sexual conquest to be preferable to that of

martial conquest. Why has he changed his mind and again armed himself? Two possibilities suggest themselves. Either he goes to battle out of a reluctant sense of duty (brought about by the arrival of Aeneas), generated perhaps through a sense of shame over his "womanish" attitude.[29] Or, what is more intriguing, perhaps Troilus goes to war in a submission to a deeper impulse that love and war share.

The initial scene is critical to an understanding of the entire play, for in a sense it confirms the ambiguous vision of the Prologue. In immediate opposition to the traditional nobility of its ancient theme, the first scene illustrates no perception of the danger of the war, no presentation of martial virtue, only the cries of a love-sick youth. The character of Romeo springs to mind as a basis of comparison; it is crucial to remember, however, that the Trojan political situation is very different from what is was in Verona. For Romeo, the situation that obstructed his romance with Juliet was a feud between two families within the same city. Troy, by contrast, has an invading army encamped beneath its walls. The political survival of Verona was not at issue, and Romeo, before meeting Juliet, had no other loyalty than to his family. The tragic climax of Romeo and Juliet will allow the ruling prince to impose a reconciliation between the feuding families, whereas in Troy there will be no quarter given, much less reconcilation.[30]

By the end of the first scene, we are left with the two abovementioned facts regarding Troilus' character: he is in love with Cressida, and he has a low opinion of the worthiness of the war. This Troilus does not seem to be remotely similar to the man described to Agamemnon by Ulysses in Act IV:

The youngest son of Priam, a true knight;
Not yet mature, yet matchless, firm of word
Speaking in deeds and deedless in his tongue,
Not soon provoked, nor being provoked soon calmed;
His heart and hand both open and free,
For what he has he gives, what thinks he shows;
Yet gives he not till judgment guide his bounty,
Nor dignifies an impair thought with breath;
Manly as Hector but more dangerous;
For Hector in blaze or wrath, subscribes
To tender objects, but he in heat of action
Is more vindicative than jealous love.

(4.5.96-107)

This catalog of manly virtues, a virtual compilation of the ideal of the Renaissance hero, does have a possible ironical intention since Ulysses' information is second-hand, presumably derived from the prolix Aeneas when Ulysses was in Troy.[31] Yet as we have noted, Troilus' courage is never denigrated by anyone else in the play; the only person critical of Troilus is Troilus. It is important, however, to stress the portrait that Ulysses had offered as a comparison to the one Troilus offers of himself. We have noted the difficulties of definition that this play has suffered through the years. If it is a tragedy then the central tragedy must be the death of Hector; but it is through the character of Troilus that we experience the problem of the play and the consequent problem of the war. Troilus, more than anyone else, is the crucible within which the events of the drama work. If there is a tragedy in this play, then it is the tragedy of Troy, a tragedy that is epitomized in the fate of Troilus.

Troilus' greatest desire at this point is simply to win Cressida; that is the apparent "love-theme" of the play. Pandarus is the mediator in the attainment of this goal, consequently Troilus devotes a considerable amount of time and energy in persuading the seemingly reluctant Pandarus to greater efforts. Yet between the first and last scene there is a calamitous

change in Troilus as he woos, wins, and then loses Cressida to the dominating demands of the political situation. In the climax of the play, he rages on the battlefield vowing revenge "more vindicative than jealous love" in a prophetic realization of Ulysses' words. The fate of Troy will indeed be shared by the young prince, but in the first scene he professes a disinterest, even a contempt, for the war. The causes of this transformation in attitude must be examined in order to understand Shakespeare's intention in making Troilus the titular hero of his play.

The tragedy of Troilus is that he, even at this point, is caught between the Scylla of private desire and the Chardybis of public duty. This tension is manifested in his character throughout the play. The impression that we receive of Troilus in this initial scene is, as already noted, in sharp contrast to Ulysses' description of him in Act IV, as well as to the rhetorical skills Troilus himself displays in Act II. Yet the agitated, introspective side of Troilus surfaces again and again at crucial points throughout the play. Troilus remains troubled, he does not finally overcome his bodily desires and put himself at the service of the city, he does not attain maturity in a vision of personal responsibility subordinated to a common cause. He remains torn between two equally attractive forces - the consummation of desire in a sexual relationship and the spirited quest for honour and glory in war.

Shakespeare's focus on the two lovers as the fulcrum for the play can be appreciated if we comprehend, as Shakespeare obviously did, the antagonisms intrinsic to Troilus' situation. The tension between private desire and public duty is inherent to any polity, and the greater the value assigned to individualism and free choice, the more difficult it is for a regime to enlist the aid of its best citizens in enterprises that call for self-sacrifice. Erotic desire is a fundamental, and pre-political, component of human nature. Political society, understood as "a partial or particular society whose most urgent task is its self-preservation and whose highest task is its self-improvement"[32] is continually forced to grapple with the paradox that this tension generates. Erotic desire is the basis of the attraction between the sexes that leads to the propagation of the children that will continue the city. Yet the external threat of war is also a danger to the self-preservation of the political society. Civil society must, therefore, encourage both private desire and public duty in mutually sustaining ways that ensure the preservation of the polity.

In its elliptical way, the Republic makes clear the problem that a political society faces when duty is subordinated to erotic desire. Socrates can think of "no greater and keener pleasure than the one connected with sex."[33] Glaucon emphatically agrees, adding that he can think of no "madder" pleasure either. Later in the dialogue, this problem is made more explicit when Socrates asks:

> Have we any greater evil for a city than what splits it and makes it many instead of one? Or a greater good than what binds it together and makes it one . . . Doesn't the community of pleasure and pain bind it together, when to the greatest extent possible all the citizens alike rejoice and are pained at the same births and deaths . . . . But the privacy of such things dissolves it, when some are overwhelmed and others overjoyed by the same things happening to the city and those within the city?[34]

The Socratic solution for this problem is the exaltation of the communal, of the institution of familial communism, and of teaching those things that will bring harmony between body and soul. That these problems are perennial is borne out in a recent book by George Gilder:

> We must consider the part that each of our economic and social usages plays in the intrincately woven armature of eros: the generator of our will, commitment, vitality, creativity. It is possible that a society is more profoundly identified by its sexual than by its industrial and political management.[35]

Gilder goes on to comment that "the tie between sex and male activity is perhaps the most important variable in shaping a civilization".[36] But the priorities of the peaceful city are different than those of the city of war, and Troy is most obviously a city at war. The skills of sexual management must give way to those of political and military management. But Troilus is desirous of some things that Troy cannot directly provide. He is not unaware of his duty, but he is unhappy at the prospect of sacrificing one for the other. This much is clear from his opening remarks. The problem for Troy - and in this it typifies political society - is how to sublimate the private erotic desires of a man like Troilus to the larger problem of political survival. In the first scene, we learn much about Troilus and his attitude to the war. But it is also, and this is crucial, a scene of private desire. In the midst of one of the most famous wars in either history or legend, the titular hero of the play can only bemoan his unsatisfied desires. This, one of the most profoundly political plays in the Shakespearian corpus, begins with a revelation of the wholly private desires of its main protagonist. This opening scene should alert us to Shakespeare's larger purpose. Is it significant that the greater part of this scene is concerned with a conspiracy, that most

private of activities, between Troilus and Pandarus? Shakespeare's presentation of the conflict between private and public interests constitutes one of the most brilliant and sagacious scenes of this ambiguous play. Before we can understand that, however, we must consider Shakespeare's presentation of his heroine.

Cressida and the Strategy of Love

The second scene appears, at first glance, to serve the same proximate ends as the first. It introduces Cressida and illustrates her relationship with Pandarus. Yet it is also a scene pervaded by opinion and rumour. We are told, in a reversal of the Homeric theme, of the anger of Hector; we are then given a less than flattering portrait of Ajax; and finally, we hear Pandarus' estimation of the martial virtues of the Trojan military leadership.

According to Cressida's manservant, Hector's anger is due to his being bested in combat by Ajax the previous day. The battle was apparently inconclusive, for Hector has survived; he is, however, ashamed and has today, at sunrise, quit the city for the field in an attempt to redeem his wounded pride. This reference to Hector's shame would seem to indicate that he is primarily pained by the personal dishonour in being bested by Ajax (as opposed to any setback to the interests of his city). Confirmation of this might be that Hector is impatient to return to the battlefield; for we are informed that Hector, who is known for his patience, has berated his wife, struck his armourer, and spent the

previous night neither eating nor sleeping. These actions, so minutely described, stand in obvious contrast to what Troilus thinks of both himself and the war.

What is most explicitly ironic about Hector's shame is that the cause of it is held up as an object of ridicule. Troilus has praised the Greeks for their martial virtues - their strength, skill, ferocity, and valor - while in this scene, Ajax, the warrior who will eventually duel with Hector, is described as a man in whom all manner of virtues and vices have commingled in a laughable chaos of humanity. The only factual information that emerges here is that Hector has been bested, and consequently shamed, by Ajax. If there is one constant in this shifting play, it is the courage and public-spiritedness of Hector; he is the archetypal hero with whom no one can favorably compare. If the servant's portrait of Ajax is accurate, then Hector is perhaps justified in feeling ashamed. However, another consideration arises from this report. If Hector is the bravest man, the epitome of Trojan nobility (as he is generally conceded to be by both sides), then his defeat by such a one as Ajax would seem to be as much a matter for lamentation, as for laughter. For Trojan residents such as Cressida and her servant, it can only be tragicomic at best.

Cressida's dramatic function so far has been to act the part of the questioner. In this initial conversation with her servant, she has made no direct statement, instead asking a sequence of six related questions. The entrance of Pandarus sparks her first statement: "Hector's a gallant man."(1.2.37) Her servant's response to this is agreeable, but somewhat ambiguous. While he agrees that Hector is gallant, he adds the caveat:

"as may be in the world, lady.[38] Is he saying that Hector is constrained in his gallantry by the exigencies of this world? Gallantry is not simply bravery; it is magnanimity, nobility, chivalry, and what the ancient Greeks called thumos or spiritedness. In this play Shakespeare questions the grounds and possibility of such thumos being harnessed to the public good and Cressida's servant appropriately emphasizes its problematic existence.

Pandarus' actions here are similiar to those of the previous scene. There, he counselled Troilus to patience while praising the beauty and charms of she whom Troilus should be patient for. He enters upon this scene as a man of bustling inquisitiveness. He asks Cressida nine questions in the brief space of twelve lines: however, it is readily evident that his questions are rhetorical since he obviously knows the answers to all of them. Cressida's servant had begun the scene by telling of the rumour of Hector's anger, but Pandarus appears as the rumour-monger par excellence: he knows Cressida and Alexander were at Ilium; he knows that Helen was still in bed when Hector left for the field; and even though he asks Cressida, he also knows the cause of Hector's anger.

That Pandarus knows the cause of Hector's anger is quickly passed by so that he can get to his real purpose in being there: the praising of Troilus. The petulance that Pandarus displayed with Troilus in the previous scene has disappeared. This suggests that perhaps his reaction was feigned and that the conspiracy is the most important thing to him. Unlike Troilus' reactions to the uncle's eulogy of his beloved, Cressida is

not anguished by Pandarus' praise of the young prince. She instead mocks his exaggerations. The basis of Pandarus' praise is that Troilus is a better man than Hector, but after Cressida derides Pandarus' efforts in this direction (with retorts based on sexual puns), Pandarus amends his opinion to say that Troilus is not yet mature, but that he will be a better man when he does reach maturity. Indeed, Pandarus states his belief that Hector does not now have, nor will he ever have, Troilus' wit, qualities, or beauty.(81-86) The question of nobility or courage, however, is not mentioned. This description agrees with that of Ulysses save that there is no mention of Troilus' vengefulness (cf. 4.5.107).

The summit of Pandarus' exaggerations is reached when he declares that Helen loves Troilus more than Paris. This is based on Pandarus' relation of an incident at the Trojan court (which he seems to have witnessed); an incident the relating of which is meant to demonstrate Troilus' desirability and importance, as well as his wit. Upon reflection, and with knowledge of how the rest of the play proceeds, what this scene does is foreshadow the first scene of the third act, the scene that shows us the light-hearted and licentious nature of the Trojan court. Pandarus, the ultimate sycophant, thinks all of this witty word-play amusing, but he also tells us that the basis of Troilus' wit was to allude to Paris as a cuckholder, a second instance of Troilus making a reference to Helen's adultery.

If Cressida's role thus far in this scene has been to act, first, as a questioner, and then as a mocker, it is also evident that she is fully aware of Pandarus' matchmaking ambitions. Still, she gives only one

indication that she favors Troilus ('oh he smiles valiantly'), and even that remark has a tinge of irony about it. Her true feelings will not be disclosed until the end of the scene when she is alone.

The conversation of Pandarus and Cressida is interrupted by the return of the army. It is here that Pandarus delivers his hortative estimation of their virtues as they pass by. Although his aim is to show her Troilus - a suggestion that perhaps they have never met - Pandarus also renders his judgment of five other returning warriors - Aeneas, Antenor, Hector, Helenus, and Paris. Aeneas is "a brave man . . . one of the flowers of Troy." Antenor, whose disposition will figure prominently in the action to come, is "shrewd . . . one of the soundest judgements in Troy whosoever, and a proper man of person." Although Pandarus' explicit intention here is to praise Troilus, and despite his earlier praise of Troilus as superior to Hector, when the latter passes by, Pandarus can scarcely contain himself:

> That's Hector, that, that, look you, that; there's a fellow! Go thy way Hector! There's a brave man, niece. O brave Hector! Look how he looks! There's a countenance! Is't not a brave man?
> . . . . . .
> Is a not? It does a man's heart good. Look you what hacks are on his helmet. Look you yonder, do you see? Look you there; there's no jesting: there's laying on, take't off who will, as they say; there be hacks!
>
> (188-91, 193-97)

Pandarus' praise is exceedingly fulsome, and as it is said of Hector (and not Troilus) we might believe it honestly delivered. Indeed, what is most interesting about Pandarus' behaviour here is that his praise seems virtually uncontaminated by envy. He pointedly emphasizes the damage to Hector's armour, a comment that in turn indicates that this "good sport"

has a darker side. This also underlines that Hector's anger has caused some damage to the Grecian ranks. Paris, in his turn, earns the praise of "gallant" and "brave" from Pandarus, who is relieved that the rumour of Paris' injury in untrue since such injury would cause Helen to be unhappy! By the time that Helenus passes by, Pandarus is completely distracted looking for Troilus:

> That's Helenus. I marvel where Troilus is.
> That's Helenus. I think he went not forth today.
> That's Helenus.
>
> (207-09)

Here, the verbal repetition that previously underscored Pandarus' admiration for Hector, serves to emphasize his distraction and his indifference to Helenus' qualities. When Cressida asks if Helenus can fight, her question is appropriate since, unlike the others, Pandarus has given no words of praise to him. Pandarus' answer is pertinent to the action to come:

> Helenus? No. Yes, he'll fight indifferent
> well. I marvel where Troilus is. Hark, so you not hear
> the people cry "Troilus"? Helenus is a priest.
>
> (211-13)

Pandarus thinks Helenus fights only indifferently, but we are not given any specific reason why this is so. Yet Pandarus does pointedly emphasize Helenus' profession. Shakespeare, in this classical setting, alludes to a constant political conflict, that of priest and warrior, or in the modern formulation of church and state. Can a priest be a warrior? Certainly the Old Testament has abundant examples of the warrior-priest. Helenus' presence on the field would seem to indicate that, at least in Helenus' mind, the gods sanction the Trojan cause; but if he fights

indifferently, might this be because his heart is not in the war? In any event, we might think that men such as Pandarus, who are not warriors, would be eager to have both priests and warriors on the defensive lines. Does it not reduce to the fact that in war it pays to have all the help you can get? Whether that aid is human or divine would seem, in the last analysis, to make little substantive difference. Pandarus' disdain for Helenus serves to remind us, however, that men naturally seem to admire warriors more than priest.

Shakespeare's Trojan War differs most precisely from Homer's in that the gods have no role in the action. The successful prosecution of the war is seen to be dependent on the resolve of individual men. There are only two priests in the play: Helenus, and Cressida's father, the traitor Calchas. Neither of them are favourably presented, which perhaps agrees with the absence of the gods, of prayer, or of any religous justification for the war. Yet, the protagonists do call on the gods. Indeed they appeal rather frequently to the heavens; by my count there are sixty-nine appeals to the gods either generally or by name. Why is there this evidence of at least external piety and no evidence of a divine response? Is Shakespeare suggesting a godless universe; that man is at the mercy of his own designs? Of course, these are pagan gods in a pagan setting - perhaps they are only invisible and ineffectual as a way of showing their impotence. But perhaps Shakespeare meant to suggest something more general, such as man's actions when sundered from divine aid.

With the final arrival of Troilus, Pandarus apparently loses all restraint and objectivity:

Mark him, note him. O brave Troilus! Look well upon him, niece. Look you how his sword is bloodied, and his helm more hacked than Hector's; and how he looks and how he goes. O admirable youth! he never saw three and twenty. Go thy way, Troilus, go thy way! Had I a sister were a grace, or a goddess, he would take his choice. Oh admirable man! Paris? Paris is dirt to him; and I warrant Helen, to change, would give an eye to boot.

(219-227)

If this description is even partially accurate - that is, if Troilus' sword is indeed bloodied and his helm more hacked than Hector's - then we are given more than the impression that Troilus has fought. If we assume a chronological coherence to these scenes, then Troilus, who was late to the battle, has done fantastic work, in immediate contrast to his own words.

The arrival of the common soldiers abruptly shuts off Pandarus' praises. It is only the nobility defending Troy who are praiseworthy: the common soldiers are "asses, fools, dolts; chaff and bran, chaff and bran; porridge after meat."(229-230) Pandarus illustrates in microcosm the perennial problem of fame and honour. Now, Hector's fame is legendary and we may assume that it is deserved; whereas Pandarus has a personal stake in his praise of Troilus: Pandarus would become related by marriage to the royal court if Troilus marries Cressida. Yet when Pandarus' previous praises are contrasted with his dismissal of the common soldiers who are surely deserving of at least some token praise from those for whom they defend the city, it is possible to see a certain biased selectivity at work.

Pandarus' behavior here anticipates Ulysses' discussion with Achilles, a discussion that analyzes the fickle relation between deeds, honour, and public recognition - a problem that lies at the very heart of this strange play. The departure of the soldiers allows Pandarus to resume his praise of Troilus, a task he undertakes with characteristic zeal: "I could live and die in the/eyes of Troilus . . . I had rather/ be such a man as Troilus than Agamemnon and all Greece."(242-46) This hyperbole provokes Cressida to the retort:

> There is amongst the Greeks Achilles, a better man than Troilus.
>
> (247-48)

Cressida is instantly rebuked by Pandarus as he calls Achilles "A drayman, a porter, a very camel".(249) Pandarus accuses Cressida of not knowing what a man is, what virtues make up the complete man:

> Well, well? Why, have you any discretion, Have you any eyes, do you know what a man is? Is not birth, beauty, good shape, discourse, manhood, learning, gentleness, virtue, youth, liberality, and such like, the spice and salt that season a man?
>
> (251-57)

Since Pandarus has been praising Troilus prior to Cressida's mention of Achilles, we may assume that this list of virtues Pandarus means to implicitly attribute to Troilus, and any such list must naturally be compared to Ulysses' description of Troilus. Both lists may be seen to reflect the Renaissance ideal of the gentleman-soldier as incarnated in such English heroes as Walter Raleigh and Philip Sydney. Both Pandarus and Ulysses (via Aeneas) have set up an ideal; the question is whether Troilus, especially in view of his self-critical disparagement in the first scene, can live up to these assessments. Cressida, for her part, does not

believe this, or if she does, she dismisses it as a "minced" and thereby effeminate description of a man; it seems that for Cressida, what is lacking in such a man is masculine sexuality.

The bantering between the two continues in a ribald tone that cannot help but make an audience wonder if Cressida actually is, very much as Troilus thinks, "stubborn, chaste, against all suit."(1.1.97) She speaks of her need to defend her wiles with her wit; her honesty with her secrecy; her beauty with a mask. This reiterated need for defence, for secrecy and masks is puzzling at first. Is Cressida concerned for her chastity or with giving an external impression of chastity?

Yet if we see this speech in relation to the larger context of the play's themes, then its meaning becomes clearer. Cressida speaks of the need for defence, for secrecy, for deception - are not all of these things equally necessary to a successful military campaign? Consider what Machiavelli, the author of perhaps the most infamous book on politics, says in his drama Clizia:

> The man who said that lovers are like soldiers certainly was speaking the truth. The captain wants the soldiers to be young, women want their lovers not to be old . . . . Courage, faith, and secrecy are equally necessary in the military and in love: the perils are equal and the end is often the same.[37]

This understanding of the reality, in contrast to the appearance of the romantic quest is reaffirmed in Cressida's last speech; it is a soliloquy delivered after the exit of Pandarus:

.....Women are angels, wooing;
Things won are done - joy's soul lies in the doing.
That she beloved knows naught that knows not this:
Men prize the thing ungained more than it is.
That she was never yet that ever knew
Love got so sweet as when desire did sue.
Therefore this maxim out of love I teach:
'Achievment is command; ungained, beseech'.
Then though my heart's content firm love doth bear,
Nothing of that shall from mine eyes appear.

(272-285)

That Cressida is no innocent waif adrift in the chaos of war is evident here. She admits that she sees more in Troilus than Pandarus could ever describe. Yet she hesitates to commit herself; her reasoning being that if she gives herself up to love, she will lose the position of power she now holds as an object of desire. Men think women are angels while they pursue them, but once desire is satisfied, men will command where once they begged. Here the idea of love as a contest, one that must be entered into with the utmost seriousness, is emphasized. As in war, surrender is an ignominious possibility, something to be avoided at all costs. And like the prudent general who takes the balance of forces, terrain, and supply into his strategic considerations, the prudent woman must take cognizance of male pride; hence in order to attain ultimate victory there must be retreats as well as advances.

Since Cressida fears that the value Troilus attaches to her will be dissipated by her surrender to his will, she must not acquiesce in her own desires, since this would render her powerless. Paradoxically, she must prolong the chase, while at the same time, offering herself as the prize. Like Ulysses, Cressida knows that "things won are done" and that it is the activity of courtship, not the deed of consummation, that gives the greater value. She is thereby convinced of the need not to show love: however, the actions of the upcoming scene will severely test this resolve.

The problems of Troilus and Cressida are thrown into stark relief with the introduction of the Greeks. This initial Grecian scene is justifiably famous, and not only because it is one of the most crucial in the entire play. It is one of the most overtly political, as well as philosophical, dialogues in the corpus.[38] The first direct appearance of the Greeks, the other side of the war, is not a private scene, like those which introduced Troilus and Cressida. There we felt the war only in its impingement on the private lives of the two lovers. The Greeks are shown in council as they debate the policy of the war. Here the conflict is central not peripheral. And unlike the Trojan council scene of the following act, this is not a family affair.

It begins with Agamemnon, the nominal head of the assembled army, asking the cause of the apparently dispirited attitude of those in council. Although we might initially assume from his question that he is perplexed by their depression, this assumption is dispelled when he immediately begins a speech urging fortitude:

> The ample proposition that hope makes
> In all designs begun on earth below
> Fails in the promised largeness. Checks and disasters
> Grow in the veins of actions highest reared,
> As knots, by the conflux of meeting sap,
> Infects the sound pine and diverts his grain
> Tortive and errant from his course of growth.
>
> (1.3.2-8)

Agamemnon believes that hope is a promise from some other realm than earth, but that it is on the earth that the designs of men begin from the proposals of hope. While hope of success can initiate man's actions,

hope can also fail to deliver on its promises. Agamemnon thus refers to the vagaries of chance which can often hinder the course of even the noblest actions. Although his first words seemed tinged with this wary fatalism, he goes on to challenge his council with the proposition that the lack of Grecian success is but a test of character. His reasoning is that all great enterprises involve trial and his challenge is strongly worded:

Sith every action that has gone before,
Whereof we have record, trial did draw
Bias and thwart, not answering the aim
And that unbodied figure of the thought
That gave't surmised shape. Why then, you princes,
Do you with cheeks abashed behold our works
And call them shames, which are indeed nought else
But the protractive trials of great Jove
To find persistive constancy in men?

Agamemnon is not prepared to go so far as to blame the gods for the Grecian failure, an accusation the Homeric Agamemnon might have made with some justice. Instead he asserts that the gods place obstacles to the hopes of men to test them, "to find persistive constancy in men". As we will see in our discussion of the Trojans, constancy is the virtue that anchors much of the justification of the war. Troilus will demand that the Trojan council remain constant to their original decision; here Agamemnon seems to be urging the same thing. The greatest difference between the two forces, however, may be that the Greeks, being the invaders, could simply withdraw; the Trojans, on the other hand, can only fight or surrender Helen; they cannot withdraw. Like the Trojans, Agamemnon is faced with a breakdown of will, of a loss of desire in waging a war, the outcome of which, after seven years, is still in doubt. The Trojan decision to continue fighting will be justified in appeals to honour, glory

and reputation, not to survival; since we know that the war will continue, it is important to determine the conditions that rekindle the Grecian desire for victory.

Now the chief virtue that a general is concerned with in any army is surely discipline, discipline grounded in moderation. But the will to victory can only be sustained when the warrior is constant in his desire for such victory. Discipline and moderation are thus allied to constancy: the disciplined soldier will fight when the situation demands it. If, however, a soldier were to waver in his desire to support such situations, then the discipline that is the chief virtue of a soldier would evaporate. What may seem a tautological proposition actually alludes to a fundamental martial problem.

Agamemnon dismisses fortune as the crucial consideration - fortune is fickle and can favour both the deserving and the undeserving. Fortune is here conceived in the traditional manner, not as something to be mastered but rather to be endured.[39] Agamemnon's view of fortune is one that is shared by the venerable Nestor:

With due observance of thy godlike seat,
Great Agamemnon, Nester shall apply
The latest words. In the reproof of chance
Lies the true proof of men.

(30-33)

In Nestor's opinion the valiant man defies chance and this defiance is itself proof of manhood, for there is no distinction between the courageous and the cowardly when things are easy. The appearance of courage and the reality of it are two different things. As Nestor says: "Even so/Doth

valor's show and valor's worth divide in storms of fortune."(43-5) Nestor believes that the truly courageous man will reply to these storms with anger, and then, presumably, with action. Despite its vivid imagery, Nestor, in this emotive rhetorical reply, really does no more than paraphrase Agamemnon. The sentiments seem the same for both men - the courageous man is defined by the trials of fortune and endurance is the test of courage.

Courage is the virtue whereby one is willing to face the worthwhile risks inherent in life, and to endure whatever unpleasantness fortune brings. There is, in our tradition, an account of fortune that is radically at odds with that of Agamemnon and Nestor. The writings of Machiavelli also contain the most influential teaching on the role of fortune in political life. His bluntest statement is in The Prince and it might be useful to review it in order to place Shakespeare's teaching about fortune in perspective:

> It is not unknown to me that many have held and hold the opinion that wordly things are so governed by fortune and by God, that men cannot correct them with their prudence, indeed that they have no remedy at all; and on account of this they might judge that one need not sweat much over things but let oneself be governed by chance . . . Nonetheless, in order that our free will not be eliminated, I judge that it might also be true that fortune is arbiter of half our actions, but that she also leaves the other half, or close to it for us to govern. And I liken her to one of those violent rivers which, when they become enraged, flood the plains, ruin the trees and the buildings, lift earth from this part, drop in another; each person flees before them, everyone yields in their impetus without being able to hinder them in any regard. And although they are like this, it is not as if men, when times are quiet, could not provide for them with dikes and dams so that when they rise later, either they go by a canal or their impetus is neither so wanton or damaging. It happens similarly with fortune, which shows her power where virtue has not been put in order to resist her and therefore turns her impetus where she knows that dams and dikes have not been made to contain her.[40]

While Machiavelli never expressly asserts that fortune can be entirely mastered, what he does state is that "fortune is the arbiter of half our actions, but that she lets the other half, or nearly that, be governed by us."[41] But the implication of likening fortune to a river, is that it can be turned and channelled, and in fact entirely mastered, if one has sufficient knowledge and political resources. The Machiavellian hero, the one who embodies virtu, thus prepares for "storms of fortune" by making what plans he can. The mastery of fortune is to be found in both prudent preparation and impetuous action but not in acquiescence. Nowhere in their speeches do Agamemnon or Nestor remotely consider the mastery of fortune, and it is this that is crucial to their account of things, and perforce, to the problems that beset the Grecian camp.

For the ancients, the central question of political philosophy was the question of the best regime, both within the individual soul as well as the city. As Plato makes clear in the Republic, however, its realization depends upon a fortunate coincidence: the coincidence of political philosophy and political power.[42] The actualization of the best regime is thus beyond the power of most human beings - it is dependent on chance. Now while Agamemnon is not debating the problem of the best regime, he still faces a profound political problem - the successful prosecution of a war already seven years old - that illustrates, in microcosm, many of the problems that work against the realization of the best regime. Hence, while this problem surfaces within the context of a military camp, we may still view this camp as a particular form of regime, a regime with its own particular political problems.

Agememnon and Nestor's solution is a kind of faith: to be constant, secure in the belief that such constancy is both virtuous and manly, and, indeed, the path to victory. In one sense, their reasoning is surely correct, for community itself is generally founded upon a common faith, thus a plea for constancy to that faith is reasonable. Yet, given the anarchy that is looming in the Greek camp, to rely exclusively upon an appeal to that faith seems politically imprudent. It is these naive assessments that are quickly challenged by Ulysses, although his response is framed in a manner both courteous and formal. As a speech, it has been justly celebrated for its pregnant imagery and powerful tone. As a speech, it is a paradigm of deliberative rhetoric, as that form is analyzed by Aristotle in the Rhetoric.[43]

It begins with a formal introduction, a peroration, in which Ulysses acknowledges Agememnon's supreme leadership:

> Agememnon,
> Thou great commander, nerves and bone of Greece,
> Heart of our numbers, soul and only spirit,
> In whom the tempers and minds of all
> Should be shut up, hear what Ulysses speaks.
>
> (54-57)

Ulysses then goes on to compliment Nestor whom he wishes could ".....knit all the Greekish ears/To his experienced tongue."(66-67) Although these are courtly flourishes, they also allow Ulysses, by the rhetorical method of insinuatio, to work his way into his argument. Ulysses hints at the problem he perceives when he speaks of how the tempers of the Greek army "should be shut up" within Agamemnon's authority, as of course they are not. Nestor, similarly, has not knitted

"all the Greekish ears/To his experienced tongue." The evidence of their failure is manifest in Ulysses' speech. They have failed to both win the war and retain the loyalty of their troops, and this failure, in the final analysis, is a failure of leadership.

Once Ulysses receives Agememnon's assurance that his words are welcome, he makes his first point by restating the problem, albeit more explicitly, that has brought them together. "Troy, yet upon his bases, had been down/And the great Hector's sword has lacked a master/But for these instances:" (74-76) This is the problem: Troy is still standing and Hector is still alive - but why? Ulysses' answer reflects his earlier hints - there is no rule of authority in the Greek camp: "The speciality of rule hath been neglected."(77) And the results of this neglect are all too obvious: factionalism has infected the camp; the hierarchy of authority is dissipated - "Degree being vizarded/Th' unworthiest shows as fairly in the mask."(82-83)

Having stated the problem and given an initial reason for its existence, he begins to describe the universe in its regularity and proportion:

The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre
Observe degree, priority, and place,
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,
Office and custom, in all line of order,
And therefore is the glorious plant Sol
In noble eminence enthroned and sphered
Amidst the other; whose med'cinable eye
Corrects the influence of evil planets.
And posts like the commandments of a king,
Sans check, to good and bad.

(84-93)

Here is the traditional cosmology of the universe as it was derived form Ptolemy: the earth is the centre of the cosmos and the other planets

revolve around it. Here as well is one of the great Shakespearean correspondences - the sun-king analogy.[44] As the sun corrects the deviations of the other planets, so too does the prudent ruler correct the deviations of his subjects. The well-ordered polis is thus akin to the well-ordered universe; however, the pernicious effects of the neglect of the true art of governance can also be compared to the end of the universe:

.....But when the planets
In evil mixture to disorder wander,
What plagues, what portents, what mutiny,
What raging of the sea, shaking of the earth,
Commotion in the winds, frights, changes, horrors,
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate
The unity and married calm of states
Quite from their fixture! Oh, when degree is shaked,
Which is the ladder of all high designs,
The enterprise is sick!

(93-103)

It is degree, the relation of the ruler to the ruled, and the inter-relationships of all those who make up a polis that gives order and integration. The ironic aspect of Ulysses' introduction is now clear: the ruler of the Greeks is Agememnon but since he has neglected the speciality of rule - an insistence that all orders of rank be respected - factionalism now infects the army, similiar to the chaos that would affect the universe if the planets no longer kept to their assigned courses and the sun refrained from corrective action. As that divine ruler, the sun, orders the universe, so too should the mortal ruler order his polis. If he does not, the result is anarchy and chaos:[45]

Take but degree away, untune that string,
And hark what discord follows! Each thing meets
In mere oppugnancy, the bounded waters
Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores
And make a sop of all this solid globe;

Strength should be lord of imbecility,
And the rude son should strike his father dead;
Force should be right, or rather right and wrong,
Between whose endless jar justice recides
Should lose their names, and so should justice too;
Then everything includes itself in power,
Power into will, will into appetite,
And appetite, an universal wolf,
(So doubly seconded with will and power)
Must make perforce an universal prey
And last eat up himself.

(108-123)

While this speech is often cited as evidence of Shakespeare's belief in the Tudor doctrine of order, we might ask if this comparison of cosmos and polis is more than just a magnificent analogy. Note that Ulysses speaks of "when the planets/ In evil mixture to disorder wander," that is, not if they wander but when. This possibility not only denies a permanent harmony to the universe but puts this speech at odds with Tudor convention. Ulysses' purpose may be discovered if we consider David Lowenthal's comment on Julius Caesar: "The metaphysical tendency of ambition is to enthrone contention or war as the ruling principle of the universe, thus compelling even the visible universe . . . . to be at best a temporary and perhaps illusory harmony rather than an assured cosmos."[46] Is Ulysses' ambition not intimately tied to Grecian victory, and is not that victory more assured when men believe that they inhabit a contentious and unstable universe?

This elevation of contention and and war allows us to notice the conspicuous omission of divine purpose (whether called God or Providence) from Ulysses' account. Tillyard, in his classic study, saw this: "The picture, however, though so rich, is not complete. There is nothing about God and the angels, nothing about animals,

vegetables or minerals."[47] After noting this, however, Tillyard goes on to say "For Shakespeare's dramatic purposes he brought in quite enough [and] it would be wrong to think that he did not mean to imply the two extremes of creation . . ."[48] But if Shakespeare meant to "imply" the complete aspects of an ordered universe, the point is that he did not.

I have already called attention to the fact that Troilus and Cressida, unlike the Iliad, is distinguished by the absence of any divine beings. Yet the main characters continually call on the gods despite the lack of evidence for their existence. While the argument can be advanced that this is a pagan play and the absence of pagan gods is but proof of the Christian piety of the author, it must also be noted that the traditional sources of the Trojan legend portrayed Zeus, Apollo, Athena, and the other gods as present at the siege. Beyond pious intent, why would Shakespeare reject the divine presence?

Perhaps the answer lies in the influence of Machiavelli, who wished to make men dependent on their own resources, and not swayed by the influence of imaginary principalities. The real challenges were here, in this world, and not in the next. If the gods are eliminated as a factor in the desires of human beings, as they are in Troilus and Cressida, then the premise of Machiavellian politics, that fortune can be mastered if one has sufficient knowledge and political resources, can be examined. Consider the one instance of cosmic purpose in Ulysses' speech: that of "the med'cinable eye" of "the glorious plant Sol". Although this implies some sort of cosmic control, it has no moral dimension. Medicine is a morally neutral art - it cures both good and bad men alike. The advancement of this proposition allows Ulysses to state his own physic for

the ailing Greeks. Since the disease has already become contagious, and no cosmic force exists to redress the problems of the Greek camp, then the implicit aspect of Ulysses' argument emerges: man must adopt a stance of either passive acceptance or mastery. It is Agamemnon and Nestor that exemplify the former position, and Ulysses the latter.

That they have adopted a posture of passivity is evident from their acquiescence to the vicissitudes besetting the army; hence, when Agamemenon fails to see this implicit critique of his leadership, Ulysses seizes the moment to prescribe his more radical medicine to the Greek council. Here, Ulysses clearly demonstrates his mastery of the rhetorical art. He begins with specifics, then dilates the argument by citing examples which will prove the truth of what he has said:

> The great Achilles, whom opinion crowns
> The sinew and forehand of our host,
> Having his ear full of his airy fame,
> Grows dainty of his worth, and in his tent
> Lies mocking our designs. With him Patroclus
> Upon a lazy bed, the livelong day
> Breaks scurril jests,
> And with ridiculous and silly actions
> Which (slanderer), he imitation calls,
> He pageants us.
>
> (141-150)

Achilles is celebrated in legend as the greatest warrior of the Grecian cause; however, the Shakespearian Ulysses speaks only of the "opinion" of Achilles' fame. This innuendo, whether fair or not, subtly casts doubt on Achilles' martial prowess. By doing so, Ulysses also manages to force an evaluation of the deservedness of Achilles' heroic reputation. By Ulysses' account, Achilles has withdrawn from the war, and refusing to fight, encourages Patroclus to mock the Grecian leadership. This "pale and

bloodless emulation" is the sickness that has infected the Greek camp. Nestor hastens to add that Ajax is also in rebellion and is exhorting Thersites to slander the generals. The fear that Ulysses and Nestor share is that this profoundly dangerous attitude of contempt will spread, like a contagious disease, throughout the Greek army.

Yet given Ulysses' earlier characterization of chaos both cosmic and domestic, and their apparent inevitability, is there any remedy that will suffice to reanimate the Grecian cause? If there is, Ulysses never gets to deliver it, due to the arrival of Aeneas. This break in Ulysses' speech in nonetheless fascinating, particularly because the irony that has permeated it is even more visible here in the consequent exchange between Aeneas and Agamemnon. Still, the truncated aspect of Ulysses' speech does leave some questions for the thoughtful reader. As we subsequently see, Ulysses does eventually propose a remedy for the problem. The question is, what would Ulysses have proposed if Aeneas had not made his (as it turns out) fortuitous entrance. The plan that is actually implemented is possible only on the basis of the information that Aeneas delivers; hence, what we see is precisely how Ulysses seizes the opportunity of the moment in an attempt to master the Grecian impasse.

II

Aeneas has come to the Greek camp to deliver a challenge from Hector. His opening words make clear that there is a truce in effect between the two combatants. Indeed, Aeneas speaks of a "dull and long-continued truce", indicating that the noise of battle has been absent

for some time.(259) This throws some light on the leadership problem in the Greek camp: they have been at war for seven years; they have failed to achieve victory, and they are not even fighting at this moment. Hector's message reflects this state of affairs; he has lost his fighting edge and wishes to meet some Greek in single-combat.

Aeneas delivers this challenge in a manner both courteous and ironic, much as Ulysses addressed Agamemnon. Indeed, the first words between Aeneas and Agamemnon provide a barbed illustration of the problem Ulysses has just discussed. A mere paraphrase cannot do justice to the marvellous irony that Shakespeare displays here. These are the opening remarks:

AGAMEMNON: What would you 'fore our tent?

AENEAS: Is this great Agamemnon's tent, I pray you?

AGAMEMON: Even this.

AENEAS: May one that is herald and a prince
Do a fair message to his kingly eyes?

AGAMEMNON: With surety stronger than Achilles' arm
'Fore all the Greekish host, which with one voice
Call Agamemnon head and general.

AENEAS: Fair leave and large security. How may
A stranger to those most imperial looks
Know them from the eyes of other mortals?

AGAMEMNON: How?

AENEAS: I ask, that I might waken reverence,
And bid the cheek be ready with a blush
Modest as morning when she coldly eyes
The youthful Phoebus.
Which is that god in office, guiding men?
Which is the high and mighty Agamemnon?

(213-229)

Even though Agamemnon refers to "our" tent, Aeneas does not seem to infer the connection that the royal "we" implies. Aeneas' inability (or refusal) to recognize Agamemnon suggests that the Greek leader does not possess the majesty that a king should wish to have, a visible manifestation of the specialty of rule. Once again, the theme of appearance and reality, first touched upon in Troilus' allusion to Helen's beauty being created by spilled blood, is mentioned. Agamemnon, however, cannot answer Aeneas' question as to how a stranger would know Agamemnon from other mortals. Aeneas speaks of "that god in office, guiding men", but asks how to distinguish the general from "the eyes of other mortals". If Agamemnon is truly god-like, then this attribute should be obvious; if it is, Aeneas pretends not to notice, and if it is truly not visible, then Ulysses' critique gains credibility. Agamemnon is seemingly in love with the flattery that accompanies political rule, but is unaware of the practical relationship between the appearance and the reality of political rule. Even at this point we might assume that Ulysses' warning has been lost on the Greek general, for although Ulysses

explicitly defined the problem in the Greek camp, Agamemnon still promises Aeneas security "stronger than Achilles' arm". And at the end of this conversation with Aeneas, he even promises to give word of Hector's challenge to Achilles. Agamemnon's own words confirm that Achilles is, indeed, the "sinew and forehand" of the Greek army; hence, Achilles' "airy fame" must be seen to be deserved, at least in Agamemnon's eyes.

This dialogue that follows Ulysses' speech manifests a concern with both the appearance and the reality of political authority and warrior honour. Although Aeneas seems not to recognize the appearance of authority, the possibility arises that he is feigning ignorance, and that Agamemnon's original comment is true: Aeneas is not a "ceremonious courtier" but rather "scorns" Agamemnon. Since Agamemnon is the leader of the Greek forces, by refusing to recognize their leader, Aeneas also could be denigrating the power and authority of the Greeks. Be that as it may, Aeneas' account of Hector's challenge continues the concern with warrior honour:

If there be one among the fair'st of Greece
That holds his honour higher than his ease,
That seeks his praise more than he fears his peril,
That knows his valor and knows not his fear,
That loves his mistress more than in confession
(With truant vows to her own lip he loves)
And dare avow her beauty and her worth
In other arms than hers; to him this challenge.

(261-268)

Here we see the four major components of martial virtue: honour, praise, valor, and love. It is the validity of these concepts that is ruthlessly examined, on both Greek and Trojan sides, in the succeeding action of the play. The lack of decisive political authority, the problem that inhibits the Grecian cause, is coeval with the Trojan problem of the

honour-seeking warrior. The solution of the Greek problem lies at the heart of the plan that Ulysses discusses with Nestor after the withdrawal of Aeneas and the Grecian generals. But given this inter-relatedness, what Ulysses proposes will throw valuable light on the Trojan problem as well.

Here Ulysses restates the problem in terms that echo Agamemnon's opening words to the council. There, Agamemnon had compared their obstacles and setbacks to the knots that form in trees and divert their growth. Given his eulogy of constancy as the virtue most needful to the Greeks, this implies that men must be like trees and endure the knots of frustrated desires. While using the same imagery, Ulysses states a much more pragmatic solution to the problem: "hard knots" can be split by "blunt wedges." Ulysses is unwilling to be patient; indeed, he appears to recognize that time may aggravate an already worsening situation. Knots, once formed, must somehow be dealt with. He continues his forestry imagery with an explicit look at Achilles:

> .....the seeded pride
> That hath to this maturity blown up
> In rank Achilles, must now be cropped
> Or, shedding, breed a nursery of like evil
> To overbulk us all.
>
> (312-316)

Ulysses uses an image from nature, as Agamemnon did, but Ulysses is the man who will impose form upon chaotic nature. He does not counsel endurance but positive action. Shakespeare thus presents Ulysses as the political philosopher within the Grecian camp. He is politically astute because he clearly perceives their problem and proposes a plan to overcome that problem; he is philosophic because he is the only one in the

Greek camp who sees their situation within a broader cosmic context. The implications of this is another question that must be borne in mind as the play progresses. His plan is exceedingly simple but it is also dependent upon the events of the moment. Ulysses thinks that Hector's challenge, "However it is spread in general name/Relates in purpose only to Achilles."(318-319) By substituting Ajax's name for Achilles' in a rigged lottery, the Greeks will deny Achilles the opportunity to win honour by fighting Hector. This plan will also ensure that the best of the Greeks is not defeated in a single combat.

Ulysses' plan has often been denigrated by critics who fail to see the dual thrust of it. Ulysses wants to crop "the seeded pride" of Achilles, an event that will occur, he thinks, when Achilles is denied the opportunity to fight. However, when the lottery is effected and Ajax prepares for the duel, Achilles is seemingly unaffected by the news. Ajax's pride, on the other hand, becomes virtually cancerous in proportion. Yet we must note that if at least part of Ulysses' plan is to keep Achilles from fighting at all, then in this he surely succeeds.

The bluntest statement of this critical denigration of Ulysses can perhaps be found in Whittaker's comment faulting Ulysses for "expending his wisdom on an intrigue to end a petty broil"[49] As we have seen from the speech of the Grecian council this is certainly not a "petty" problem. Ulysses' plan is to seize the moment and turn it to Greek advantage and here he does seem to epitomize the Machiavellian position. Fortune does not seem to be an unopposable obstacle to his plans, it is only in opportune moments that advantage can be turned.[50]

An initial comparison has already been made with respect to the idea of fortune in the speeches of Agamemnon, Nestor and Ulysses but we might also note that by advocating a rigged lottery, Ulysses has anchored his plan in fraud. Something that makes for an interesting comparison with another rigged lottery in our political tradition.[51] Given the peculiar political dynamics of the Grecian camp as Shakespeare gives them (it is traditionally a camp of volunteers), Ulysses cannot simply persuade Agamemnon to order Achilles to fight. For the maintenace of harmony it is important that the appearance of chance be maintained. This, of course, raises the question of whether chance plays any role in the action whatsoever. One cannot deny that the arrival of Aeneas was not a matter of chance, but once that situation develops, the control of chance becomes paramount.

Agamemnon, the ruling general of the Greek armies, has advocated fortitude in opposing the vicissitudes of ill-fortune, as has Nestor, the oldest (and supposedly wisest) of the Greek generals. In order to demonstrate his fitness as the most asute political man in the Greek camp, Ulysses must carry his plan through to fruition. If Achilles returns to the war in a manner that seems voluntary, the Greek cause will strengthen, Agamemnon will appear authoritative, and perhaps, the war will be closer to an end. In this light, Ulysses' scheming seems hardly "petty". The actual regimes, in comparison to those existing only in speech, are formed of souls less amenable to persuasion. Is it any wonder that Ulysses must use fraud as well as persuasion to enact the end for which the Greeks should be - and presently are not - striving?

In order to ascertain Ulysses' plan to curb the anarchy in the Greek camp and chastise the rebellious Achilles, it is necessary to leap forward to late in the Third Act. This is the last of the three deliberative scenes and it is naturally linked to the previous two. It is akin to the Trojan council scene in that it is explicitly concerned with the idea of honour, and the fame that is believed to accompany great honours. It is, of course, also related to the Grecian council scene in that it forms part of the attempt to deal with the rebellion of Achilles.

The first part of Ulysses' plan was to manipulate the lottery so that Ajax, and not Achilles, would be the Grecian representative in the duel with Hector. This has been accomplished by the end of Act II. The council has acted to feed Ajax's pride (under Ulysses' direction); they have told him that he is a far greater warrior than Achilles. The second part of this plan is to convince Achilles to return to the fray without allowing him to think that he is indispensable to the Grecian cause.

Ulysses begins his game by having Agamemnon and his fellow generals walk by Achilles' tent, ignoring him as they pass, with Ulysses following behind. Ulysses persuades the generals to this by speaking once again of Achilles' pride and the medicine that will cure it - pride and derision - as wielded by Ulysses. The council must appear too proud to talk to Achilles; in this way their proud behavior will teach Achilles that he is overly proud. Meekness would only increase his pride. Ulysses can then apply his "derision med'cinable"(3.3.44).

Achilles' reaction to the rebuff is immediate, and, not surprisingly, he is visibly concerned with the injury to his honour that may result. He is at first puzzled by the council's behavior, asking "Know they not Achilles?" Patroclus, his companion in rebellion, reflects that the generals used to come to Achilles "as humbly as they used to creep/To holy altars."(73-74) Although this comment tellingly reflects on the reputation of "god-like" Achilles, it is Achilles himself who offers the more perceptive comment on honour in the affairs of men:

.....What, am I poor of late?
'Tis certain, greatness, once fall'n out with fortune,
Must fall out with men too. What the declined is
He shall as soon read in the eyes of others
As feel in his own fall; for men, like butterflies,
Show not their mealy wings but to the summer,
And not a man, for being simply man,
Hath any honour, but honour for those honours
That are without him, as place, riches, and favor,
Prizes of accident as oft as merit;
Which when they fall, as being slippery standers,
The love that leaned on them as slippery too,
Doth one pluck down another, and together
Die in the fall.

(74-83)

Although honour should be an indication of one's success or excellence, Achilles seems acutely aware that honour is essentially an external thing and dependent on the opinion of others for its maintenance.[52] Here we see the central paradox of honour; it is bestowed by others and cannot simply rest on a personal sense of achievement (i.e. victory). Yet strangely enough, Achilles is unsure of the reason for this particular snubbing; he believes himself to still possess everything but the recognition of the council. His hesitation causes him to hail Ulysses who is walking behind the council, reading a book and seemingly oblivious to their actions. Although Achilles' behavior indicates his awareness of the

sources of public honour, he is seemingly unaware of the possible ramifications of both his retreat from the war and his satiric criticisms of the leadership. His decision to interrupt Ulysses' reading confirms this ignorance.

Unlike the rest of council, Ulysses is deferential to Achilles; addressing him with the honorific title of "Great Thetis' son!"(94) Achilles asks what Ulysses is reading, and Ulysses' reply would seem to confirm Achilles' previous observation that man cannot boast of having anything except through the mediation of others. Although Achilles still thinks himself possessed of all that fortune can bestow, save the acknowledgement of the Greek council, he also realizes that the prizes of fortune often depend on other men. Ulysses, by confirming this opinion for Achilles, prepares to teach Achilles the obligations that this dependence entails, while Achilles, for his part, indicates by his initial statement that he can be schooled by Ulysses.

A strange fellow here
Writes me that man, how dearly ever parted,
How much in having, or without or in,
Cannot make boast to have that which he hath,
Nor feels not what he owes but by reflection;
As when his virtues aiming upon others,
Heat them and they retort that heat again
To the first giver.

(95-102)

Ulysses' recapitulation of his 'author's' statement contains an implication that should be examined. By stating the things one owes to others, Ulysses implies that honour is relative; although the greatest deeds deserve the greatest honours, the awarding of such honours is always dependent upon others, and thus upon their ability to recognize

true greatness, as well as their willingness to do so. Traditionally, the greatest honours are typically awarded to the greatest warriors; it is skill and bravery in battle that most readily captures popular appreciation. Achilles' acceptance of this indicates that he does not consider himself to be self-sufficient.

Ulysses' plan has as its fundamental premise the belief that Achilles will be upset if Ajax is honoured over him. The fact that Achilles does understand the source of the honours that are important to him is at first confusing. If honour is important and can only be given by others, then why has Achilles withdrawn from those who give what he desires? What must be taken into consideration is the possibility that Achilles' withdrawal may originate in a desire to extort more honour (in the form of supplications). Indeed, is this not exactly what Achilles has been doing until this planned snubbing by Ulysses? This possibility forces us to carefully attend to the reasons Achilles gives for his withdrawal from the fighting.

Nestor has already mentioned that Achilles "rails on our state of war".(1.2.190) Ulysses, for his part, told Agamemnon that Achilles and Patroclus "Count wisdom as no member of this war,"(1.3.197) while the strategic ideas of the Grecian leadership are reduced to "bed-work, mapp'ry, closet war."(1.2.204) If this is true, and given the impasse in the Greek camp, there is ample reason to suspect that it is, then why has Achilles even remained at Troy? The Homeric Achilles was prepared to leave for home when the final insult to his honour was delivered. Here we have the apparent paradox of the honour seeking man who has withdrawn

completely from fighting, yet remains to heap scorn on the directors of the war. Of course, their failures in his absence simply inflate his apparent importance. Achilles does not reject Ulysses' position but in his reply he makes an unusual semantic shift when he moves from the idea of virtue to that of beauty.

> This is not strange, Ulysses.
> The beauty that is borne here in the face
> The bearer knows not, but commends itself
> To other's eyes; nor doth the eye itself,
> That most pure spirit of sense, behold itself,
> Not going from itself; but eye to eye opposed
> Salutes each other with each other's form;
> For speculation turns not to itself
> Till it hath travelled and is married there
> Where it may see itself. This is not strange at all.
>
> (102-111)

This comment, seemingly linking honour and beauty, is actually disanalogous, for while one might be dependent upon others to judge one's comparative beauty, this is not true with respect to victory: one usually knows whether or not one is victorious, and thus deserving of honour. Hence, this shift from honour to beauty is revealing, for while Achilles first commented on the general's rebuff of him in terms of honour, Ulysses' gloss on his author speaks of virtue and obligation, while Achilles speaks of beauty. Given the relationship between love and war, honour and eros in this play, perhaps this shift is, as Achilles says, "not strange at all." For Achilles' mention of beauty reveals his awareness that the beautiful cannot know itself but depends on the recognition of others.

Yet, if beauty cannot know itself except through the mediation of others, while victory is immediately visible without the mediation of others, than what is the status of honour and virtue? It would seem that there is a fundamental difference between these things. Both beauty and virtue

can be honoured, but it would be strange to speak of a (physical) beauty that no one recognizes; the same is not true about virtue. It is well known that virtue often goes unrewarded. The question thus arises if man can seek honour in a solitary context; and the answer would seem to be no. A man may cultivate his virtues in seclusion, but to seek honour is of necessity to be part of a tribe, a community, a polis. With this, Ulysses and Achilles are in apparent agreement. But it is not questions of beauty that have brought Ulysses to Achilles' tent; it is a question of virtue; the Greeks want the use of Achilles' most prominent virtue, his military prowess. So Ulysses blithely ignores Achilles' suggestion and reiterates his author who states:

That no man is the lord of anything-
Though in and of him there be much consisting-
Till he communicate his parts to others;
Nor doth he of himself know them for aught
Till he behold them formed in th' applause
Where they're extended; who, like an arch, reverb'rate
The voice again, or like a gate of steel
Fronting the sun, receives and renders back
His figure and his heat.

(115-123)

Ulysses says that his author has not so much stated an ususual argument, (indeed he calls it "familiar"), as he has reminded Ulysses of Ajax. Ajax is "unknown" but "chance" has given him the opportunity to publicly display his courage. Unlike Achilles, we know from the circumstances of the lottery that 'chose' Ajax for the duel that "chance" played no part in this. Shakespeare alludes to this with his simile of the "gate of steel/Fronting the sun,"(121-122): when heat is applied - and "applause" may not be the only source of "heat" - the metal becomes more malleable, and thereby prone to easier manipulation. Ulysses here practises his own political metallurgy, bending the warrior, the man of steel, to his own devices.

Achilles again displays his intelligence, exclaiming his belief in the truth of Ulysses' statement and asking - "What, are my deeds forgot?"(144) Ulysses quickly exploits this suggestion with his famous speech on time and reputation. It has been often quoted, but its essence may be found in this:

> Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back,
> Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,
> A great-sized monster of ingratitudes.
> These scraps are good deeds past, which are devoured
> As fast as they are made, forgot as soon
> As done.....
> .....Let not virtue seek
> Renumeration for the thing it was.
> For beauty, wit,
> High birth, vigor of bone, desert in service,
> Love, friendship, charity, are subjects all
> To envious and calumniating time.
>
> (145-174)

While Ulysses' observations on time are profound - for given his awareness of his mortality, a self-consciousness about time does rule man's life - we must note that his dominant concern is with the effect of time on reputation. This is why Ulysses goes on to say - "The present eye praises the present object . . . . Since things in motion sooner catch the eye/Than what not stirs."(180;183-184) Rousseau, in his discourse on heroic virtue, noted that "Heroic virtue is, unlike the virtues of society, the work of nature, fortune, and the hero himself."[53] But Achilles has ceased to work at heroic virtue; he has ceased to make himself. He has come to depend on his past deeds to carry him in the present, confident that his reputation will endure.

Achilles' only response to Ulysses is to say that "Of this my privacy/I have strong reasons"(190) This is surely an inadequate defense, given what we have been told of Achilles' satiric criticisms of

Agamemnon and his council, we might reasonably expect a condemnation of Grecian tactics and strategy. It is a ludicrous thing to pretend to seek privacy in the middle of a war, especially when one is encamped upon a battlefield. Ulysses retorts that there are greater reasons against such privacy. He then delivers one of the two great bombshells in this play: "'Tis known, Achilles, that you are in love/With one of Priam's daughters."(192-93) This revelation is something that has not once been mentioned by anyone in all the deliberations on the Grecian impasse. Ulysses' earlier criticism of Achilles' behavior had centered on his pride and his contempt for the Grecian leaders (cf.I.3.143, 312-13). This prompted the questions regarding this paradoxical aspect of Achilles' character; if he is in love with honour and the goods that honour brings, how then can he withdraw from the activity that brings him these goods? Suddenly, Ulysses brings forward a reason, if one may call it that, for Achilles' actions. Achilles' response is not to deny the allegation but neither does he find the words to defend his actions. Ulysses then asks if Achilles should wonder why this is known:

> The providence that's in a watchful state
> Knows almost every grain of Pluto's gold,
> Finds bottom in th' uncomprehensive deeps,
> Keeps place with thought, and almost, like the gods,
> Does thoughts unveil in their dumb cradles.
> There is a mystery (with whom relation
> Durst never meddle) in the soul of state,
> Which hath an operation more divine
> Than breath or pen can give expression to.
>
> (195-203)

Here then is the final expression of the "specialty of rule" and proof positive that "no man is the lord of anything." The watchful politician looks for disruption of degree, secrecy is practically impossible in a public world. Indeed, Achilles should not be surprised that

All the commerce you have had with Troy
As perfectly is ours as yours, my lord;
And better would it fit Achilles much
To throw down Hector than Polyxena.

(204-07)

The prelude to this dialogue between Achilles and Ulysses was Ulysses' promise to administer "derision med'cinable" to cure Achilles' pride. The derision seems to have been of a two-fold significance. First, Ulysses warned Achilles of the fleeting nature of fame; attaining the honour bestowed by others is insufficient for long-term satisfaction. The desire for fame resides within too many other breasts for a man to rest assured that his place is secure forever. This is less derision than a gentle rebuke. Achilles seems to have forgotten the source of his position and Ulysses reminds him of this. The second aspect of Ulysses' warning is less gentle; he informs Achilles that what was thought secret is not; and that there will be no fame in possessing Polyxena; the greatest honour for a Greek warrior will be the defeat of Hector. Ulysses adds to his warning with his words that songs of homage will be paid to Ajax if he conquers Hector. With a final assurance that he speaks as Achilles' friend, Ulysses leaves.

Patroclus, who has been present throughout the conversation, blames himself for Achilles' predicament. He confesses his own aversion to the war but reveals that the reasons the Greeks ascribe to Achilles' withdrawal are mistaken. This indicates that Patroclus, not surprisingly, also knows the true reason for Achilles' secession. Achilles is not unmoved by Ulysses' words: "I see my reputation is at stake;/My fame is shrewdly gored."(227-28) Yet, his subsequent decision is oddly ambiguous:

Go call Thersites hither, sweet Patroclus;
I'll send the fool to Ajax and desire him
T' invite the Trojan lords after the combat
To see us here unarmed. I have a woman's longings,
An appetite that I am sick withal,
To see great Hector in his weeds of peace,
To talk with him and to behold his visage,
Even to my full of view.

(233-240)

Achilles may feel his reputation is in danger, but he does not hasten to don his armour; he expresses a desire to see Hector face-to-face. This reaction is ambiguous only if we continue to think of Achilles as he has been spoken of by others: Ulysses speaks of his "barren" brain, and Thersites' invective resounds with the accusation of ignorance and stupidity.[54] Yet Achilles has shown himself throughout his conversation with Ulysses to be a perceptive and intelligent man. His reason for not fighting seems to be the same as Troilus - the love of a woman. He understands the danger that he is in, but his first thought is tactical: he will view the enemy.

Of the two reasons adduced for Achilles' retreat, both are essentially simple. It is difficult to find a soldier that will eagerly fight for an incompetent general, and the claims of Venus over Mars are striking throughout this play. The reasons might be simple, yet the central question remains - can a hero cease being a hero? To have reached the pinnacle of martial virtue is not the journey of an instant, and to throw it all away for a woman should be more puzzling than we are apt to recognize. Yet, here as throughout the play, we must not surrender to the conclusion that it is Shakespeare who is confused, there is a point to this depiction of Achilles, as well as to Ulysses' critique, things that only become clear when we consider the Trojan situation.

Troy and the Rule of the Lovers of Honour

The assembly of the Trojan council is the second of the three deliberative scenes in Troilus and Cressida. It is bracketed by two scenes that conspire to destroy both its dignity and that of the previous Grecian debate. The first of these scenes introduces Achilles, Ajax, Patroclus, and the railing Thersites; the same foursome are present again following the Trojan debate. In neither of the scenes do the heroes display any semblance of heroic virtue. Ajax's pride is magnified by the flattery of the Greek generals while Achilles snubs their authority and reclines in his tent. While both of these scenes are ostensibly of minor importance, their parenthetical location allows them to stand in contrast to the deeper reflections of Greek and Trojan.

Unlike the Grecian council, this meeting is strictly confined to the ruling aristocracy of Troy. Priam, the king, is present, as are four of his sons, Hector, Paris, Helenus, and Troilus. All are members of the royal family, there are no generals, councillors, or other advisors present. And in particular, the loquacious Aeneas is absent. Any decisions made here will not be subject to ratification. They have convened to discuss a demand from the Greeks to return Helen. Priam's opening words make it clear that this is not the first time such a demand has been made. The ultimatum, as delivered by Nestor, speaks of "the hot digestion of this cormorant war."(2.2.2) These words give weight to the sense of futility that has been evoked, on both sides, in the preceding scenes.

Priam does not offer any opinion himself but instead asks Hector, his eldest son, to speak on the matter. Hector's response is to emphasize that while he is no coward, there is "no lady of more softer bowels" as far as the future is concerned.(10) Indeed, he says, as none of them can predict the future, to seek the safety of peace is more prudent than to prolong an unsure war. For this reason alone, Hector counsels the release of Helen. His decision is reinforced by his belief that so many Trojans should not have died to defend something that is not theirs. Hector thus casts immediate doubt on any legal or moral claim that the Trojans might use to justify the retention of Helen. This is the reasoned (and ethical) response, a policy dictated by the most prudential of motives - the survival of the polis - the rejection of a policy that unneccessarily risks everything. Hector's reasoning is thus in accord with the understanding that sees the most urgent and primary task of a political society to be its self-preservation. Troy is in danger from the attrition that this stalemated conflict has generated; self-preservation dictates withdrawl.

It is interesting to note that the Greeks are still, after seven years, prepared for negotiation. For the return of Helen and the payment of damages, they will end the war. This is not a demand for unconditional surrender; but neither is it, as the Greek council scene revealed, delivered from an enemy in a position of clearly superior strength.[55] Nonetheless, Hector's assessment seems correct; acceptance of the demand generates consequences that can be reasonably anticipated. Rejection of the ultimatum, on the other hand, throws the Trojans into that uncertain future that Hector fears.

Thucydides, in his history of the Peloponnesian War, relates the story of the inhabitants of Melos.[56] Like Shakespeare's Trojans, they too had a choice when confronted with an Athenian ultimatum: absorption into the Athenian empire or an almost sure destruction. For reasons that defy utilitarian calculation, the Melians chose the latter alternative despite its predictable result. The Trojans at this point, cannot know precisely the consequences of refusal; they have been weakened by the conflict, but not decisively, and perhaps no more than the Greeks. Their options are accordingly more open than those confronting the Melians. As we know, in the end the results will be the same; both Melos and Troy will be obliterated. The Melians chose their fate with few illusions about the outcome. Their only hope of relief lay with their ally Sparta, not in their own hands. The Trojans however, are mired in a problematic decision, the consequences of which are unknown.

If the Trojans, like the Melians, opt for the continuance of the war, then the supposition that the survival of the polis is the fundamental concern must be thrown into doubt. Yet is this not the fundamental paradox of both human individuals and their polities; that they will, on occasion, do the rash and unpredictable thing? That there are fundamental alternatives available to men and cities becomes evident in considerations like these. It is possible to see the polis "as being for the sake of noble actions," as Aristotle put it, or as Hobbes alternatively saw it, for comfortable self-preservation.[57] The dramatic structure of this scene allows Shakespeare to question the inevitability of Troy's fall; the alternatives are available to his Trojans. It is crucial to precisely consider his presentation of why they might reject such an ultimatum.

Hector's assessment of their choices is quickly challenged by Troilus. This is the fifth challenge to occur thus far in the play. His challenge stands in obvious contrast to the attitude and character he presented in the first scene. He is openly contemptuous of Hector's counsel of surrender:

.....
Fie, fie, my brother!
Weigh you the worth and honour of a king
So great as our dread father in a scale
Of common ounces? Will you with counters sum
The past-proportion of his infinite,
And buckle in a waist most fathomless
With spans and inches so dimunitive
As fears and reasons? Fie, for godly shame!

(24-31)

Such "reasons" as Hector has given are, in Troilus' mind, merely utilitarian calculations. They are insufficient to measure something so great as the honour and nobility of a great king. Troilus sees honour as something that cannot be measured by so prosaic an accounting as profit-and-loss calculation. Such reasoning takes its bearings from everyday fears, whereas kingly honour should always be raised above the commonplace. Troilus seems to believe that honourable men have no need for any 'reason' that is grounded in such a plebeian perspective. Ironically, however, he reveals a rather commonplace conception of reason; it is something narrow and cramped because it is conceived on the model of mathematics. Such reason is often rejected by the enemies of reason because they believe, as Rosen has noted, that it "objectifies, reifies, alienates; it debases or destroys the genuinely human."[58]

Yet the question arises as to whether there is a place for <u>any</u> loftier kind of reason in the Trojan councils; that is, a place for dialogue and dialectical argument. If a 'reason' that has as its basis the security of the

polis is rejected as only a common or conventional calculation for dishonourable men, then what place has wisdom in the Trojan cosmos? Is there a reason that encompasses warrior honour; and with what claim does the house of Priam presume to rule the city of Troy? This does not denigrate the force of Troilus' argument, for we must recognize that by rejecting Hector's reasons for surrender, he has raised two important questions: Is there an intuitive recognition of the noble; and is not honour a necessity for a ruler's power?

Troilus' brother, Helenus, sees cause to object to Troilus' defence of Priam's honour. He accuses Troilus of attacking Hector's reason only because he has no reason of his own. Helenus cannot see why Priam should not be influenced by reasonable argument, but Troilus is not to be swayed by such criticisms. He responds to Helenus in a contemptuous manner. He first emphasizes Helenus' occupation and the state of mind he believes attends it: "You are for dreams and slumbers, brother priest."(36) He then goes on to suggest that Helenus is a coward, and once again, as with Hector, he manages to equate this kind of reason with cowardice:

You fur your gloves with reason. Here are your reasons:
You know an enemy intends you harm;
You know a sword employed is perilous,
And reason flies the object of all harm.
Who marvels then, when Helenus beholds
A Grecian and his sword, if he do set
The very wings of reason to his heels
And fly like chidden Mercury from Jove,
Or like a star disorbed?

(38-46)

In this speech, Troilus clearly demonstrates his conception of reason. According to his account, Helenus, like Hobbes, believes that "reason flies the object of all harm." By mentioning Helenus' vocation, Troilus alludes

to that perception we first noted in Pandarus' assessment of Helenus in Act I: If a priest fights at all, it is only "indifferent well." Troilus goes farther here, as he virtually accuses Helenus of, at best, excessive caution, or at worst, of cowardice. To disregard a priest suggests that the speaker places little confidence in any divine powers. Ulysses, as we have noted, conjures up an ordered but essentially godless universe. In Troy, it seems that human self-reliance will be the key as well.

Having rejected the counsel of the pious, Troilus goes on to denigrate the relevance of the reasonable to their deliberations.[59] What then causes a man to fight? If it is patently unreasonable for a man to place his life at risk in a war, then some other motivation must account for men to take such risks. To place your life in mortal danger is unreasonable, or so it seems to men of a Hobbesian stamp. Thus the question that Troilus implicitly asks is whether it can ever be reasonable to willingly place yourself in a situation that can end in death. The answer to his question would, reasonably, seem to be 'no', unless some other force existed to spur men to these risks. For Troilus the answer is the realm of honour and the rewards that accompany it. Shakespeare thus once again touches upon the problematic area of political life: the status of honour, nobility, and reputation. How can the demands of the political society be reconciled with the demands of the honour-seeking man and the spectre of war? Reason should indeed "fly the object of all harm" - but if it does, if utilitarian calculation wins out, then who is left to defend the polity? The essential paradox here is that the defence of political society (and its subsequent survival) rests on the honour-seeking man.

Perhaps the pursuit of glory can only occur through the denigration of common 'reason', and the substitution of a rhetorical defence of honour and courage. Possibly this is why Troilus now attempts a final abjuration of Hector's "reasons." Here, again the use of reason is equated to cowardice:

> .....Nay, if we talk of reason,
> Let's shut our gates and sleep.
> Manhood and honour
> Should have hare hearts, would they but fat their thoughts
> With this crammed reason. Reason and respect
> Make livers pale and lustihood deject.
>
> (45-9)

Hector is not yet reduced to silence, as he again interjects: "Brother, she is not worth what she doth/Cost the keeping."(50) Hector has managed to divert the subject back to the question of Helen, and not the honour of Priam. Yet his remark can only fuel the fires of Troilus' disdain, since the language of reference is that of commerce - a prime arena of profit and loss calculation - with the all-too-evident cost of the war compared to its nebulous benefits.

Surprisingly, Troilus does not attack Hector's particular example; instead, he asks what may well be the central question of this debate, a question that directly impinges on Shakespeare's intention in dramatizing this legendary war. Troilus asks: "What's aught [i.e. anything] but as 'tis valued?"(51) Hector attempts to deny Troilus his point by asserting that "value dwells not in particular [i.e. individual] wills."(52) Troilus' statement that nothing has meaning except for its value epitomizes the crux of the Trojan tragedy as Shakespeare understands it. The argument that follows will be placed in a more conventional context (honour,

courage, and dignity versus treason, shame, and cowardice) but the lynch-pin of the argument is provided by the relativistic stance of Troilus vis-a-vis Hector. This is a stance that, although couched as an abstract philosophical position, is nevertheless the most radically conventional of positions, and therewith, the most politically dangerous of all.

Yet, it is crucial to remember the origins of this argument. Hector and Troilus' argument has moved to the problem of objective and subjective assessments of value; however, given the context in which it occurs, this is a discussion of ethics and the moral justification of human actions per se. Yet their argument began with differing points - Hector was addressing the value of Priam's honour (for, as the opening scene revealed, he agrees with Hector concerning Helen) - Hector is suggesting that the war rests on a mistaken premise, while Troilus resists the ideas that profit and loss calculation can measure the honour and worth of a king. Yet, this scene, so crucial to the play, can be profoundly misread if we assume that Hector and Troilus are arguing about the same thing.

Hector's answer begins with the attempt to deny Troilus his premise that value exists in individual wills. Troilus has assumed the sovereignty of the subjective observer in the attribution of value, and it is this that Hector denies.

But value dwells not in particular will;
It holds his estimate and dignity
As well wherein 'tis precious of itself
As in the prizer. 'Tis mad idolatry
To make the service greater than the god;
And the will dotes that is attributive
To what infectiously itself affects,
Without some image of th' affected merit.

(53-60)

For Hector the value of a thing is as much an intrinsic determination as any extrinsic (and therefore subjective) estimation. Hence, Hector's argument denies the value of keeping Helen (which would continue the war), as much as it denies that such decision be reached by the inclination of individual desires. When he states that it is "mad idolatry" that "makes the service greater than the god", he is also, in the context of the play, passing an ironic comment on Troilus and Paris, both of whom have turned their passionate desires into paramount preoccupations. Both Helen and Cressida have been elevated by Paris and Troilus into something greater than mere objects of desire. We may note the inflated romantic reveries in which Troilus dreams of Cressida (cf. 1.1.47-62; 3.2.16-27). While he places great value upon her, as we have also seen Cressida apparently places much less value upon either herself or Troilus. The service is indeed greater than the god.

Given the staging of these scenes, we are left to wonder if Troilus' defence of Paris' interest in Helen is not colored (i.e. prejudiced) by his own interest in Cressida. Yet, with this observation, Hector has managed to do more than simply deliver an ironic comment upon both of his love-struck brothers, for he challenges both the war and Troilus' assessment of it. Hector's response is both reasoned and prudential; being an honourable man, he has sought an honourable course, but one that can be reconciled with prudence. A man who attempts to reconcile honour and prudence cannot view reason in the same light as Troilus has. For Hector, honour must have a component of reason, it cannot simply be the utterly reckless questing for glory. To seek honour is to seek power, for the man whose actions are recognized as honourable has a kind of

power over his fellow citizens (as Hobbes knew well); however, as Ulysses has noted, power without a sense of justice degenerates into will, appetite, and eventually, universal chaos (cf. 1.3.115-123).

The crisis that grips the Grecian camp illustrates the truth of one of the fundamental axioms of political power: political power is founded in a combination of physical force and persuasion. The crisis lies in the fact that, Agamemnon, the nominal wielder of Greek political power, does not command the allegiance of his greatest warrior. Hence, it fell to Ulysses and his rhetorical skills to attempt to resolve the political impasse. As has been said, even a tyrant has to have persuaded someone. Since the Trojan scene is a council, and indeed, a family council, the matter of physical coercion would not seem to be of central concern to the debate here. The decision to abandon the war and seek an honourable peace or to continue the war into an unknown future is a decision that will be arrived at through the persuasion of speech. This is why the skill of deliberative rhetoric is important here as well. One should be curious to see if a Trojan Ulysses arises here.

Troilus answers Hector's objection with an appropriate example; it concerns the choosing of a wife, an activity that has (at least superficially) occupied his mind for some time:

I take today a wife, and my election
Is led on in the conduct on my will;
My will enkindled by mine eyes and ears,
Two traded pilots 'twixt the dangerous shores
Of will and judgement . How may I avoid,
Although my will distaste what it elected,
The wife I chose? There can be no evasion
To blench from this and stand firm by honour.

(60-67)

Although Troilus is trying to prove that value does dwell in individual wills, his point seems at first glance to be that will must stand by what it has elected. Yet a closer examination of Troilus' words indicates that what he is saying is not as simple as this. It is not simply a matter of standing by one's original choice, for Troilus implicitly acknowledges intrinsic value when he says that one cannot 'honourably' return "soiled goods", that is, things whose intrinsic value one has diminished. It is further complicated by the fact that Helen is a woman whose beauty, like that of all women, will fade. Ironically, Troilus argues that men should not be what Cressida suspects they are - fickle. If a man chooses a wife, or anything else, it is dishonourable to reject the original choice, even if such adherence is subsequently distasteful. Reason is once again subordinated to will. In his example, it is the will that triggers the initial desire, as it stimulates the senses which balance between will and judgement. The whole decision is based on will and desire and what the will has elected.

Troilus by this example betrays the rule of reason for that of individual judgement. That his judgement is not mediated by reason is illustrated when Troilus says that he chooses by depending on his senses ("mine eyes and ears") as the mediators "'twixt the dangerous shores of will and judgement." Such decisions are apparently irrevocable in the world that Troilus prefers. The yardstick for all individual decisions is honour - once a choice is made, honour requires that it be sustained. The question that arises is what if the original decision was unreasonable, or indeed, utterly irrational? Does honour demand what Troilus requires? "That there can be no evasion/To blench from this [decision] and stand firm by honour."

There are two ways in which to understand Troilus' position. One is to look at the traditional meaning of the idea of election. Election, as J.V. Cunningham has noted, "is a technical term in the medieval tradition for the act of moral choice . . . with respect to choosing the means to an end."[60] In his specific and rather circumscribed example, Troilus sees that end as marriage and the means as the choosing of a wife. But Cunningham, following Aristotle and Aquinas, also notes that "moral choice is a function of reason, of the soul, and is exercised as soon as one attains the 'age of reason' but not before . . . "[61] Troilus, in his own example, lets his election be guided by his will. This would suggest that his is an immature judgement, that Troilus has the requirements of a moral act backwards.

This interpretation, while prima facie true to what has been said, can also trivialize the scene. It is just as possible to see that Troilus, far from making an immature judgement, is issuing a radical challenge to the conventional view that reason is adequate for electing final ends; a challenge that is applicable both to love-objects, as well as to what is noble (honourable) and beautiful. This possibility is present in his following words:

.....It was thought meet
Paris should do some vengeance on the Greeks;
Your breath of full consent bellied his sails;
The seas and winds, old wranglers, took a truce,
And did him service; he touched the ports desired;
And for an old aunt whom the Greeks held captive
He brought a Grecian queen, whose youth and freshness
Wrinkles Apollo's and makes stale the morning.
Why keep we her? The Grecians keep our aunt.
Is she worth keeping? Why, she is a pearl
Whose price hath launched above a thousand ships
And turned crowned kings to merchants.

(71-82)

Troilus herewith touches upon the original political decision that initiated the war; however, in doing so he also reveals revenge as the motive that lies at the heart of this 'quarrel'. The Greeks had kidnapped Hesione, the sister of Priam and mother of Ajax. Yet the Trojans decided not to attempt to recover Hesione, but rather to exact some fitting measure of revenge. The implicit (albeit unasked) question is what was the rationality of that original response. (That is, would anything less have invited contempt of Trojan power?) Troilus here plays upon the pride of the council when he emphasizes that Paris was sent with their full consent. With this charge, Troilus implicates all those present for the state of the war. By referring them back to their incipient resolution, he demands that there "be no evasion", that they "stand firm by honour."

When Troilus claims that Helen's beauty rivals Apollo's, he adds a touch of hubristic impiety, and consequently gives weight to Hector's statement that "the service" has become "greater than the god." To suggest that a mortal can be more beautiful than a god is, in normal situations, to tread dangerous ground (even if the gods seemed sometimes to agree). Yet here we can see why Troilus' challenge is as radical as Ulysses'. If Troilus makes impious comparisions, he also reduces a divine conception of beauty to that of the secular. This move begins the enshrinement of new objects of worship in the Trojan temples.[62]

Troilus again invokes his emphasis of value as a commercial commodity, something we encountered in the first scene. Helen's value is so great, according to Troilus, that the Greeks who have come to Troy desirous of revenge have been reduced to merchants, bargaining to

achieve their ends. This assertion is, of course, dismissively insulting to the Greeks, but more importantly it also gives us a hint of how Troilus understands the Grecian intentions.[63] For this indicates, at least at the level of inter-subjective agreement, that Helen is a theme of honour and renown, and therefore an indicator of objective value. If she were not, would the Greeks have invested so much time and energy into securing her retrieval? Troilus' understanding of Grecian intentions hence posits an affinity between the Greek and Trojan defence of Helen; however, to characterize this as commercially centred is to blithely disregard the awesome potential of a martial antagonist bent upon revenge.

Troilus then reiterates the communal nature of the Trojan enterprise as well as divulging how much he thinks Helen should be valued:

If you'll avouch 'twas wisdom Paris went -
As you must needs, for you all cried 'Go, go';
If you'll confess he brought home worthy prize -
As you must needs, for you all clapped your hands
And cried 'Inestimable'!; why do you now
The issue of your proper wisdoms rate,
And do a deed that never fortune did,
Beggar the estimation which you prized
Richer than sea or land?

(83-91)

Here Troilus reveals his reason why Helen must be kept: If her capture was good once, as the council agreed it was, then is that goodness dissipated simply because the action has become dangerous? Troilus sees the reason they adduced for action did contain a component of good, whereas Hector has not spoken of the good, but of merely the utilitarian necessity of compromise in the interests of self-preservation. There is no way this won't be interpreted as a sign of weakness. Troilus has essentially cut off any easy retreat of Hector's position. For the

council to agree with Hector at this point would require both courage and humility. A man must be humble to admit a grievous mistake and to admit it in a situation wherein such admission can be construed as cowardice requires a certain kind of courage.

Troilus demonstrates some knowledge of political affairs when he speaks of the previous joint decision. The resolution that set the war in motion is now an accomplished fact, and now the event has a momentum of its own, given the physical and psychical investment of both sides. At this moment, Troilus has, by the weight of his words, forced the council to either affirm or deny their fidelity to their original decision. In his closing words, however, Troilus reveals the fundamental problem facing them:

.....O theft most base,
That we have stolen what we fear to keep!
But thieves unworthy of a thing so stolen,
That in their country did them that disgrace
We fear to warrant in our native place!

(91-95)

While it is possible to see this statement as an admission that despite the noble rhetoric with which Troilus has sought to defend the abduction of Helen, it is merely thievery and that the honour sought in defending her is simply the honour of thieves; The critical issue that remains unresolved is not the ethics of the abduction, but whether the original desires of the council still match their powers. They desired to humilate Sparta, which they did, but they now fear to justify that action in their own city. This inconstancy is what is unreasonable to Troilus.

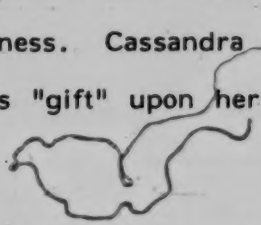
The possibilty of exploring the implications of Troilus' agrument is seemingly lost when a loud disturbance is heard off stage. The noise

announces the entry of Priam's daughter Cassandra. Rather than obscuring the differences between Hector and Troilus (and therewith their arguments), Shakespeare cleverly uses this apparent interuption to throw still more light on the differences between the two brothers. Cassandra is, of course, famous in legend as the seer whose prophecies were doomed to be disbelieved. Her most poignant prophecies were those of the destruction of Troy.[64] Shakespeare closely follows the legend of Cassandra, and following this tradition she is precisely prophetic in her speech.

Cry, Trojans, Cry! Practice our eyes with tears.
Troy must not be, nor goodly Ilium stand;
Our firebrand brother, Paris, burns us all.
Cry, Trojans, cry! A Helen and a woe!
Cry, cry! Troy burns, or else let Helen go.

(107-111)

Shakespeare reminds us that all these fine arguments will do nothing to alleviate the fate of Troy. We know they will not let Helen go and that consequently Troy will burn, yet this reminder can only heighten our interest in the argument. For the most striking fact about Cassandra's prophecy is its effect upon her brothers. The only one who is seemingly prepared to believe her is Hector. Hector speaks of Cassandra's words as suggesting "high strains of divination" while Troilus, in contrast, dismisses Cassandra as "mad" and her prophecies as merely "brainsick raptures". Prophecy is traditionally thought of in two ways; if it is accepted and believed, then it is considered a mark of divine favour; it it is rejected, it is often branded as madness. Cassandra was, of course, cursed by Apollo when he bestowed his "gift" upon her, but Hector is strangely prepared to believe her.



We have already commented upon the absence of the gods in Shakespeare's account. Even so, here the question of divine versus human power, indeed, of reason versus revelation, emerges. Paradoxically, it is Hector, the defender of reason, who is, at least tentatively, prepared to admit the possibility of revelation on Cassandra's part. Troilus, the denigrator of reason, rejects the possible intrusion of the divine. Yet, is not the most important aspect of their reaction to Cassandra's outburst the fact that they both interpret her prophecy in the way that fits their own particular positions?

Now youthful Troilus, do not these high strains
Of divination in our sister work
Some touches of remorse, or is your blood
So madly hot that no discourse of reason,
Nor fear of bad success in a bad cause,
Can qualify the same?

(112-117)

In his riposte to Hector, Troilus simply alludes to the justice, honour, and significantly, the goodness of their cause:

.....Why, brother Hector,
We may not think the justness of each act
Such and no other than th' event doth form it.
Nor once deject the courage of our minds,
Because Cassandra's mad. Her brainsick raptures
Cannot distaste the goodness of a quarrel
Which hath our several honours all engaged
To make it gracious.

(117-124)

To speak of justice and goodness here is convincing and seems to place the war on the noble plateau Troilus suggested earlier when he argued that the abduction of Helen was just retribution for the loss of Hesione. Furthermore, he argues that the justness of an act cannot be judged merely by its outcome, for no matter what that outcome, the Trojans must fight on to protect the justice of their cause.

Troilus says that they should not judge the justice of their cause by Cassandra's prophecies, nor, by implication, the number of casualties they have suffered. Yet here, as when he declared the subjectivity of value, Troilus will not forthrightly declare how valuable he thinks Helen to be, nor how necessary and unassailable the justice of their cause is. Troilus is wrapped up in the comforting and gauzy images of his own rhetoric; Helen is a pearl above price. The question however, the one that Hector has already asked, is how valuable is the pearl? Is keeping her worth a hundred dead Trojans, a thousand, even ten thousand? Is the defence of Helen worth the life of Troilus, of Hector, indeed, of the entire city? The ultimate value or worth of anything would seem to be better judged, not by what you are eagerly willing to give, but by what you are reluctantly willing to put at risk.

When the dramatic structure of the play is analyzed, we see that it is absolutely crucial that the budding affair of Troilus and Cressida be secret and unconsummated at the time of the council scene. One of the ironies of the play is the question of whether Troilus would have defended keeping Helen if he had not fallen in love with Cressida and thus concretely experienced Paris' position. If their romance had been a matter of public, or at least familial, knowledge, then Hector might openly have suggested that Troilus' judgement has been corrupted by his own love, and hence more easily asked 'how valuable is Helen?' Is her defense worth the life of our loved ones; of our father, our mother, of Cressida? Hector is unqestionably a courageous man but he is also a family man, hence one might think that he has something to protect.

Troilus' defence of the enterprise finally finds support when Paris lends his voice to the cause. His initial response merely reaffirms Troilus' earlier point, but he also adds his fear that the world might ridicule the Trojans for their indecision.

Else might the world convince of levity
As well my undertakings as your counsels;
But I attest the gods, your full consent
Gave wings to my propension and cut off
All fears attending on so dire a project.

(129-133)

Consent, in Paris' mind, ought to imply an end to fear, but that alone cannot end the war, For that, force of arms, bolstered by courage and unclouded conviction, is needed. Paris brags that if he were not one man alone he would fight the Greeks himself. He gives an interesting formulation in wishing he has as much power as he had will.

This reminds us also of the similiar situations inherent in the two camps. Paris has will but no power without the rest of Troy. The Greeks have the power but their will is divided. The Greeks need Achilles as Paris needs Troy. Indeed, and more to the point, the Trojans need Hector as the Greeks need Achilles. The contrast between the attitudes of these two heroes could not be more profound, for Hector will consider himself bound by the council's decision. Thus divided will is a problem common to both camps, and the play emphasizes the dichotomous, but yet complementary, natures of the two antagonists. Nietzsche believed that will to power is the crucial human trait, that it is, indeed, the fundamental principle of nature; yet here are two forces whose divided will is dissipating their power.

Paris and Troilus are both trying to inject the will to victory into, what they perceive as, a faltering policy. They have both accused their council of weakening in the face of adversity, of denying their original decisions. This is, in part, reminiscent of Agamemnon and Nestor's evocation of the trials of fortune as a test of men's resolve. There is, however, no Ulysses in Troy to draw the larger implications from the decision of the Trojan council. Troilus has damned reason and praised honour; Paris, for his part, must do the same. Since they have rejected the counsel of reason, they must rely on the abstraction of honour and glory.

Before Paris can continue, he is interupted by the heretofore taciturn Priam. The old king has a perceptive comment on Paris' motivation in this affair.[65] Since it is Paris who possesses Helen, he has the sweeter part of the argument, while the rest of them deal with the bitter reality of the situation. Paris replies to this with an interesting suggestion:

Sir, I propose not merely to myself
The pleasure such a beauty brings with it,

(145-146)

Paris is not, of course, proposing to share Helen with either his brethren, or indeed, the Trojan army. He is instead trying to convince them of the pleasure they all share by merely being in her presence. This sharing is aesthetic and symbolic, not sexual. Once again we see the elevation of the service against the god. These words reinforce Troilus' first tentative moves towards enshrining a new goddess in the Trojan temples. To bathe in the beauty of Helen is to share in her beauty. This

is a natural understanding of beauty, that to be in its presence is in itself beautiful, even beautifying, and hence, an ennobling experience. Paris' solution is disarmingly simple:

But I would have the soil of her fair rape
Wiped off in honourable keeping her.
What treason were it to the ransacked queen,
Disgrace to your great worths, and shame to me,
Now to deliver her possession up
On terms of base compulsion!

(147-152)

Yet Paris' words have a strange ring of paradox about them. He speaks of the "fair rape" of Helen; he calls it "treason" (again an odd formulation) to give up the "ransacked queen." Leaving aside the idea of "fair rape" for the moment, we are left with the accusation of treason. In any reasonable definition, we think of treason as the betrayal of one's own for a variety of (usually sordid) motives. Paris is accusing the recalcitrant princes of treason to Helen. The obvious point, however, is that Helen is not theirs. Paris believes that "honourable keeping her" cleanses the deed of abduction. Does this semantic point make Helen a Trojan? No, but her willing complicity in her abduction, and consequent acceptance of it might. Helen only appears once in the play, and this scene is one of deep sensuality. Her willing acquiesence in Paris' request to "unarm Hector" clearly illustrates this (cf. 3.1). This attitude is reinforced in Paris' view that it is not only treasonous, but a "disgrace" and a "shame" to give her up under threat.

Paris is raising the spectre of dishonour once again. That it is important is obvious from the continued reference to it. Yet by dwelling on the possibility of shame and disgrace, Paris and Troilus are able to

deflect attention from the possibility of seriously weighing other, perhaps more important, considerations. The political prudence necessary for wise governance is not given an opportunity to arise in this situation. The argument is continually conducted on the basis of the passionate appeals to honour. After raising the spectre of shame, Paris descends to flattery. There is no one, he says, so craven that they would not defend Helen. To reject her defence, he claims, leaves such a man with a life "ill-bestowed" and a "death unfamed."(158)

Hector is still unprepared to capitulate to the arguments of his brothers, and here he launches one final attempt to persuade them. His reply is complex and dense with the political ideas of responsibilty and obligation. He begins with the famous (or notorious) anachronistic reference to Aristotle:

> Paris and Troilus, you have both said well,
> And on the cause and question now in hand
> Have glozed, but superficially; not much
> Unlike young men, whom Aristotle thought
> Unfit to hear moral philosophy.
>
> (162-166)

The passage in question is from the beginning of the Nicomachean Ethics where Aristotle states:

> Now each man judges well the things he knows, and of these he is a good judge. And so the man who has been educated in a subject is a good judge of that subject, and the man who has received an all-round education is a good judge in general. Hence a young man is not a proper hearer of lectures in political science, for he is inexperienced in the actions that occur in life, but its discussions start from these and are about these; and, further, since he tends to follow his passions, his study will be vain and unprofitable.[66]

We might well wonder at Shakespeare's intention in using Aristotle here. Is this simply a version of the medieval tradition of citing authorities to

bolster the argument? Presuming that Shakespeare is more than merely dropping names, let us explore the possibility that the reference implies a deliberate dramatic, as well as philosophic, purpose. Given the conversation that precedes this remark, we may acquiese in its accuracy. Troilus and Paris are indeed young men seemingly unfit to hear political philosophy. After his reference to Aristotle, Hector continues his criticism of Troilus and Paris with words that evoke the spirit of Aristotle's criticism.

> The reasons you allege do more conduce
> To the hot passion of distempered blood
> Than to make a free determination
> 'Twixt right and wrong; for pleasure and revenge
> Have ears more deaf than adders to the voice
> Of any true decision.
>
> (167-170)

Once again, Hector emphasizes the lack of reason in their arguments. They are so dominated by passion that a "free determination" in the sense of a reasonable choice, that is, free of disturbing influences, is impossible. Then the passage regarding pleasure and revenge, that echoes the fifty-eighth Psalm, again reinforces one's suspicions as to the true motivation of the war - pleasure and revenge.[67] Paris' desire for pleasure and Troy's desire for revenge reveal the intertwined aspect of these private and public desires.

Despite the reasonableness of his statements, if Hector truly wishes to persuade his young brothers, he must employ something more persuasive that mere criticism of his critics. Yet he confronts a formidable problem. Troilus and Paris have an advantage in this debate, in that they have appealed to the honourable man and all of the things

that that honourable man holds dear: constancy, justice, nobility, glory, fame, the respect of others, and the traditions of the city. They have also raised the spectre of those things that the honourable man despises: cowardice, disgrace, treason, and weakness. Hector's position is thus analogous to that of Brutus, who justified the assasination of Caesar by appealing to the reason and patriotism of the mob. Anthony, however, won approval by appealing to the baser passions and greed of the mob.[68]

How can a man persuade those whose own rhetoric is suffused with such ideas? The answer is that only a Socratic rhetoric could hope to overcome such ideas, a rhetoric that evokes an even greater glory for Troy than its defending a foreign queen and perhaps perishing in the attempt.[69] Hector seems strangely unequal to this challenge, he makes a great speech, but fails to persuade, and his failure seems couched in his inability to conjure up a more rhetorically pleasing future for Troy. He again appeals to their reason, perhaps remembering Aristotle's dictum that men are by nature political but not sufficiently appreciating that there is no corresponding dictum guaranteeing that men are by nature primarily reasonable in pursuing their political and personal ends.

.....Nature craves
All dues be rendered to their owners. Now
What nearer debt in all humanity
Than wife is to the husband? If this law
Of nature be corrupted through affection,
And that great minds, of partial indulgence
To their benumbed wills, resist the same,
There is a law in each well-ordered nation
To curb those raging appetites that are
Most disobedient and refactory.
If Helen then be wife to Sparta's King,
As it is known she is, these moral laws
Of natures and nations speak aloud
To have her back returned. Thus to persist
In doing wrong extenuates not wrong,
But makes it much more heavy.

(172-185)

Hector begins this final argument by referring to natural law; he thus moves from human law to a standard of natural justice which the positive law of decent regimes seeks to imitate. He states that "Nature craves/All dues be rendered to their owners." By speaking of the 'due' or obligation that a husband has with respect to his wife, Hector underscores the fact that to deprive a husband of his due is tantamount to breaking nature's law.[70]

Like Ulysses, Hector explicitly assumes a purposive unity to nature, that it has a telos. Unlike Ulysses, however, Hector's speech does not imply that once the teleological impetus of nature is disrupted it cannot be restored. The fact that Helen has been abducted has not silenced the moral laws of nature and the nations, instead they both "speak aloud" to return her.

But for his oppenents to acquiesce in his idea that the abduction of Helen is a crime against nature, they would have to be in agreement as to what nature is. The problem is that nature and convention are usually seen as in a permanent tension. Man may be by nature political, but the only way that he attains maturity is through the mediation of others, which relies heavily on custom and tradition, much of which consists of conventions.

Hector has attempted to re-focus the problem by an appeal to natural law for standards to right and wrong. Troilus and Paris have consistently appealed to standards that in practice tend to be radically conventional (honour, glory, fame, etc.). They have shown themselves fully cognizant

of the highest conventions of Trojan society. Indeed, Troilus, with his constant reiteration of mercantile comparisons, may also be said to be cognizant of the lowest conventions as well. They have not shown any understanding of natural finality.

This is the great connection to Ulysses' degree speech. At this moment, it seems that all present, save Hector, have succumbed to the same essential view of man (i.e., man has no natural end except to win honour, die gloriously, and, hopefully, to be consecrated in the memory of humanity). They have rejected reason, which guides us in understanding the meaning of life, they have rejected natural right, which provides some trans-conventional standards for human life. Indeed, one may go so far so to suspect that they reject Aristotle's dictum of man as a political animal by nature. The fundamental premise of classical political philosophy can be understood as the establishment and perpetuation of the city, but Troilus and Paris, by their arguments, appear to care little for politics, and consequently nothing for the city. Both are prepared to sacrifice their city and family in a quest for personal glory. By their assertions they have shown their belief in the autonomy of the noble, that it, and not "crammed reason" should guide the actions of man.

By their understanding, the final destiny for the warrior, and by implication for Troy, is to seek glory which will win immortal fame in the life to come. This is not to be achieved in an after-life, but in posterity, in the memory of humanity.[71] Their tragedy is that the objects of glory for which they will sacrifice everything have been subjectively chosen by

acts of personal will. Now Hector may understand that an appeal to nature is, at this point, a fruitless endeavour given the biased minds confronting him. So he abruptly shifts from an appeal to nature to that of human law, the assemblage of conventions that rule human societies.

The implications of mentioning the law in well-ordered nations are provocative. Presumably Troy was once a well-ordered polis but the raging appetites Hector has mentioned have now seemingly been given ethical approval. The rulers of Troy have neglected this to the peril of their city. Hector's point then is well taken, as is his argument that to continue acting wrongly will not expiate a wrong but merely continue it. This is the problem of revenge masquerading as justice: it has no finality.

Yet, after saying this, Hector utters his most paradoxical words. In an abrupt volte-face he throws his lot in with that of Troilus and Paris, speaking instead of the "roisting challenge" that he has already delivered to the Greeks. To many critics this reversal on Hector's part is exceedingly puzzling and is often cited as a weakness in Shakespeare's dramatic coherence. Yet, in the most obvious of respects it is not really all that puzzling; as we have noted Shakespeare is, to some extent, constrained by his historical material. We know Troy does not negotiate nor escape its fate. However, the abruptness with which Hector capitulates seems only to emphasize the weakness of his arguments. Yet, as we have seen, Hector's arguments are not weak. One need not think Shakespeare intended that we view Hector as giving in out of a sense of helplessness or out of a loyalty to his city right or wrong. Much less is

it well-interpreted as inconstancy on Hector's part. Hector's disagreement is that although he has no qualms about the demands placed on an honourable man, he does have doubts about the honourable nature of this war. Troilus and Paris have both emphasized that honour can be won in the defence of Helen. The tragedy is that Hector appears to now believe that the high sounding rhetoric about the "theme of renown", as delivered by Paris and Troiulus, has priority over the base origins of the war.

For Hector, as much as for Troilus and Paris, honour is the raison d'etre of life itself; he has only disagreed where the honour of Troy and the honour of Hector have diverged. His opinion has been stated and rejected, and so he embraces the cause of honour. Yet in this he hardly seems helpless or confused - indeed, it seems that it is Hector that effectively rules Troy, that the final decision is his. His startling acquiescence may indicate that he is playing the devil's advocate in order to draw out his younger brothers, thereby testing their committment. By this, he may also be reassuring his father that he soberly deliberates, that he weighs both sides. His conclusion - that whatever the justness of their cause, now their reputations, both collectively and individually, are on the line, and must be defended - certainly seem to render his earlier arguments irrelevant.

The evidence for this is to be found in the body of the play. In the second scene, Cressida's servant informs us of Hector's anger and shame at being struck down by Ajax, and of the results of that anger: the long night spent neither sleeping or eating. The fact that he has challenged the Greeks prior to the council meeting suggests that he has already

decided upon continuing the war, and that the council scene has (for him at least) some ulterior purpose. A purpose that perhaps Troilus finally recognizes. Hector's only ally in council has been the priest Helenus. Even before the meetings, Pandarus has characterized Helenus as a man who only fights "indifferent well." This lack of courage on the priest's part is confirmed after Troilus' denigrates his courage; he does not speak again in the scene, or indeed, in the play. Hector's only putative ally for peace is reduced to silence by the ardor of the man who speaks for war.

This, then, lends tragic force to the play, words have become actions, honour has been made to serve the causes of a base war, and indeed, honour has become an end in and of itself. The word 'honour' has supplemented the 'deed' of honour. The play hearkens back to Homer in this sense, for in the Iliad we see the older conception of words and deeds - they are one. Mythos is united with logos.[72] A man speaks of honour, but only by his actions (his deeds) does he prove himself honourable. Hector is a product of a political society that has excessively glorified honour, as if the polity existed to serve as a means to honour, rather than honour being an instrument properly used to promote the ends of the city. Hence to argue against the doing of honourable deeds is almost akin to treason. The deeds an honourable man must do in this context have a political purpose, and that purpose requires that Hector continue fighting.

Troilus and Cressida: Consummation and Conflict

Troilus has emerged triumphant from the council scene. He has moved from being a private critic of the war to its most spirited and forthright public supporter. The difference between the Troilus of the first scene and that of the council scene is too obvious to belabour. Yet this contrast between the private and the public man raises some important questions. Given his initial disdain for the war, we might well ask what have moved him to speak for war in the first place. Since he has fallen deeply in love, the possibility emerges that he wishes to cover himself in glory in order to become more attractive to Cressida. The suggestion is credible when we remember the relationship between love and war throughout the play. If this is true then the desire for glory should become evident in Troilus' initial confrontation with Cressida.

The meeting that Pandarus has worked so diligently for finally comes to its fruition in the third act. Troilus is once again introspective; the passionately intrepid young man of the council scene has been replaced by one fearful of the coming meeting with Cressida. If Troilus has any sense of his rhetorical victory in the council, it now seems lost. Strangely, he equates the prospect of love's consummation with images of death. Pandarus, who was Troilus' "convoy" and "bark" in the first scene, is again invested with a maritime image. This time, however, Pandarus is Troilus' Charon, the mythological ferryman of the dead across the river Styx. Troilus is not thinking of a journey to oblivion, however, but to a paradisial Elysium field. But does Troilus consider love to be a kind of death or a rebirth? Troilus

explains his fear as partly due to his anxiety about his ability to appreciate sexual consummation. The possibility that he may soon taste the nectar of love has made him anxious, but he fears the union as much as he anticipates it:

I am giddy. Expectation whirls me round.
Th' imaginary relish is so sweet
That it enchants my sense. What will it be
When that the wat'ry palate tastes indeed
Love's thrice repured nectar? - death, I fear me,
Swooning destruction, or some joy too fine,
Too subtle-potent, tuned too sharp in sweetness,
For the capacity of my ruder powers.
I fear it much, and I do fear besides
That I shall lose distinction in my joys,
As doth a battle, when they charge on heaps
The enemy flying.

(3.2.16-27)

These first words reveal in Troilus the same understanding that caused him to rebuke the use of reason in the deliberations of the council. In his last words he alludes to what we have already noticed in Cressida's speech in Act I: love is like a battle. This scene is replete with words which affirm this connection; Troilus speaks of "battle", of "the enemy", and of "hostages".(3.2.26,27,100) When Troilus calls his love "true as truth's simplicity," Cressida retorts; "In that I'll war with you."(159-161) To this, Troilus responds with words that raise their love-battle to the highest of realms:

..... O virtuous fight,
When right with right wars who shall be most right!

(161-162)

Although the dialogue between the two lovers is but words, what is discussed are deeds which are themselves grounded in fear and faith. Indeed,

Troilus doubly fears the coming meeting, as Muir notes; "he fears either that he will die of an excess of pleasure, or else that he is not sensitive enough to appreciate it to the full."[73] Upon finally meeting Cressida face to face, this lover of honour and master of passionate rhetoric can only stammer: "you have bereft me of all words, lady."(151) Pandarus, however, no longer counsels patience: "Words pay her no debts, give her deeds."(152) Pandarus is now apparently anxious to see the affair consummated. Cressida tries to keep to her vow of hiding her love, yet she begins by asserting her hopes for Troilus. She quickly breaks off, then speaks of her fears. Troilus attempts to assuage her, his own fears being somehow reduced in comforting her. For Troilus thinks that fear is a kind of corruptor and promoter of illusion when he says "Fears make devils of cherubims: they never see/truly."(64-65)

If a cherubim, the creation of a supreme being, fears, then it becomes a devil, the epitome of evil. Cressida said earlier that "women are angels, wooing" (1.2.286) and if Cressida is "the beautiful and innocent child"[74] that cherubs were believed to be, can we think that Cressida, because she fears, is now evil? The bleak conclusion of their affair lends credence to this suspicion. The traditional understanding of cherubim was that they were of the second order of angels, excelling especially in knowledge. Given this, what Troilus may be suggesting is that fear corrupts knowledge.[75]

Cressida then speaks of the necessity of reason in mastering fear:

> Blind fear, that seeing reason leads, finds safer
> footing than blind reason stumbling without fear. To fear
> the worse oft cures the worse.
>
> (66-68)

Prudence, according to Cressida, is thus not simply pure reason; for anticipation and anxiety stimulate reason. Prudence takes account of fear to make the reasonable choice, which is to say that it takes its bearing from the passions, especially what many would regard as the most powerful passion: the fear of violent death. Hector did not fear the Greeks but only an unknown future; he argued, therefore, to return Helen. As Troilus in that context denigrated Hector for using reason, here he denies the existence of anything to fear with respect to love.

> O, let my lady apprehend no fear; in all Cupid's pageant there is presented no monster.
>
> (69-70)

To this, Cressida ironically asks if there is nothing monstrous either. Troilus' reply is delightfully hyperbolic, but it also critically reveals both his understanding of love and desire, and of will and value.

> Nothing but our undertakings, when we vow to weep seas, live in fire, eat rocks, tame tigers; thinking it harder for our mistress to devise imposition enough than for us to undergo any difficulty imposed. This is the monstruosity in love, lady - that the will is infinite and the execution confined; that the desire is boundless and the act a slave to limit.
>
> (72-78)

Cressida, however, asks if it is not true that "all lovers swear more performance than they are able," and even then they can "reserve an ability" that they never fulfill. (79-81) This, for her, is the monstrous thing. Troilus denies knowledge that such promises are ever made, but even if they were, he is not a man who promises anything until merit discovers his worth. The relationship of this to the council scene is, I believe, obvious. There Troilus had promised his full support for the enterprise of war; his infinite

will unrestrained by any threat of Greek power, much less their moral claim. Here Troilus avows that he would love ceaselessly; that is the desire of his will. His physical body, however, allows only temporary executions of his will. The desire is boundless but the body has limits. Troilus has conceived of his love in purely physical terms, at least on the level of demonstration. He does not speak of love as a unity of physical and spiritual elements. Yet what has he done in his defence of Helen, the choice of individual wills, but made her the object of spiritual endeavour?

Troilus had begun by demanding that honour required constancy to what the will elected. The full impact of this is revealed in the scene where he observes Cressida's infidelity with Diomedes. (5.2) Troilus can no longer honourably defend this act of his will, and all that is left to him is the hope of revenge, the response that initiated this tragic war.

Cressida's reply to Troilus' confession of boundless desire and physical limit questions the trusting of love's vows. Vows are mere words; the promises that all lovers swear. What is monstrous is that lovers do promise more than they can deliver; their deeds will never, can never, prove equal to their words. With this, Cressida shows that she is fully aware of human beings's limitless capacity for false promises. While her words do not disparage her chastity, they do show that she is particularly cognizant of sexual life, of its promises and pitfalls. In one sense, she is considering the physical side of love, but as Muir has noted the "act" Troilus speaks of may say something about both sexuality and human endeavor in general.[76]

If Troilus means what he says, then this inability to deliver imparts an ironical meaning to his council speech. If he truly thinks that value does dwell in particular wills, but that "the will is infinite and the execution confined," then it seems impossible that the will could ever hope to accomplish the execution (the deeds) that his over-valued defense of Helen requires. Troilus' subjective understanding of himself as the creator of all values can only work if he could, in Cressida's case, overcome the physical limits placed on his desire. His separation of physical actions from mental desire, however, makes it impossible for him to attain his desire, for his enterprise could not ever prove successful unless he was able to join the physical and mental capacities together. There is a fatal flaw in Troilus, a lack of appreciation of human limits, rendering him subject to the madness and thirst for vengeance that engulfs the stage by the play's end. At this point, Troilus, like "Kingdomed Achilles in commotion rages/And batters down himself." (2.3.169-170)

To be fair to Troilus, his problem is not, like Achilles', so much a possession of prideful vanity, but rather a youthful spiritedness that has not been tamed by reason. He has ascribed to his own will the power to create reasonable situations, and when those situations betray that presumed reason through an act of another's will, then Troilus' will and his senses divide. The political implications of this type of thinking are readily seen when we recall the council scene. Troilus' claim that the collective will of Troy has approved the defence of Helen as a means to collectively honour her, is seriously weakened when the limits of execution of the will's desire are brought out.

Even if the valuation of Helen were never to change (which, however unlikely, is possible since it is subjectively rendered), there is still the possibility that the desire of Troy's collective will will also prove "a slave to limit." For seven years they have defended the city, but does not the act of war, like the act of love, have limits? As we have seen the crux of the council scene revolves around the desire to defend Helen as an object of immortal honour, while never discussing the idea of victory. The realisitic argument regarding war is not touched upon until the closing scenes. Troilus, fully disillusioned by Cressida's infidelity, chides Hector for his "vice of mercy." Hector's vice is that when he defeats a Greek in battle, he lets them live. Hector calls this "fair play" but Troilus considers it "fool's play." (5.3.43) Troilus now passionately calls for ruthless war, for total war:

..... For th' love of all the gods,
Let's leave the hermit Pity with our mother;
and when we have our armours buckled on,
The venomed vengeance ride upon our swords,
Spur them to ruthful work, rein them from ruth.

(44-48)

Hector thinks Troilus "savage" for even suggesting this; for Hector remains true to his chivalric ideal. He is the higher timocrat whose love of honourable victory is stronger than his love of honour, an honour he receives from enemies as well as friends. His insistence on "fair play" bespeaks the victory-lover's desire for untainted victory. This newly discovered realism is the ultimate response to war; although Troilus remains morally obtuse to the bitter end, he has now gained enough fore-knowledge to see the end of war as the destruction of enemies. This determination, whether savage or not, is the only way to attain victory. We have now gone full-circle in Troilus' understanding of war, although it still remains a personal and subjective

understanding. The common good of the city has never once entered Troilus' deliberations. He is concerned here with personal vengeance against Diomedes as much for destroying his ideals as for inheriting his beloved. Even after the death of Hector, with a foreboding of the fall of troy, all Troilus can do is shift his desire for revenge to Achilles:

Frown on, you heavens, effect your rage with speed;
Sit gods, upon your thrones, and smile at Troy!
I say, at once let your brief plagues be mercy,
And linger not our sure destructions on.
..... And thou great-sized coward,
No space of earth shall sunder our two hates.
I'll haunt thee like a wicked conscience still,
That moudeth goblins swift as frenzy's thoughts.
Strike a free march to Troy! With comfort go;
Hope of revenge shall hide our inward woe.

(5.10.6-10,25-31)

Except for the curious epilogue by Pandarus, Troilus' words effectively conclude the play. Courage remains for Troilus, but it is a courage based on existential resolution. Shakespeare has brought us to the final pathetic conclusion and Troilus' final words echo the political problem that has run as a thread throughout this play. We began by hypothesizing that this enigmatic play was not simply concerned with an ancient war but with offering a perspective on war generally. In the concluding remarks, I shall attempt to demonstrate the martial issues Shakespeare has dramatized so profoundly.

Conclusion: The City and Man

Any final conclusions on a Shakespearean drama are a tentative matter at best. His greatest plays are complex entities, full of subtle meaning. This is particularly evident with regard to Troilus and Cressida. While earlier generations tended to see the play as flawed, modern critics have occasionally viewed the play as structured in a deliberate confusion.[77] Thus Arnold Stein defined the play as "a dramatic form of the disjunctive imagination", while Una Ellis-Fermor saw "discord as the central theme" reflected in "a deliberately intended discord of form also."[78] Shakespeare achieved this discord through a particular use of anticlimax, which as McAlindon observes, combines with the language of the play to create an intense "dissonant effect."[79] Yet the argument that informs the preceding discussion of Troilus and Cressida is founded on the idea that Shakespeare's plays, and most particularly this one, contain a coherent teaching on politics that it is worthwhile to uncover. If the play is an exercise in dissonance and disjunction, as it undoubtedly is, then what teaching, beyond the idea that anarchy in souls and cities breeds chaos, can possibly emerge?

Our problem, is first, to understand how Shakespeare's rhetorical strategies meshed with his dramatic techniques. In a recent book, Joel Altman has discussed the relation of Tudor rhetoric to dramatics.[80] He argues that to fully understand Elizabethan drama, we need to comprehend the great heritage of the rhetorical tradition. This was the concept of sophistic rhetoric, of arguing in utramque partem, on both sides of the question. One of the great debates surrounding Troilus and Cressida has been whether Shakespeare was pro-Trojan and anti-Greek, as tradition would have it, or vice-versa, or

indeed sympathetic to neither side. If we follow Altman's suggestions, then is it not possible that Shakespeare is indeed arguing on both sides of the question here, that he gives his audience reasons to support and condemn both sides simultaneously?[81]

Furthermore, we might ask if the dissonance noticed by critics is founded in Shakespeare's desire to negate any simple attachment to one position or the other? If Shakespeare is indeed arguing on both sides of the questions evoked by this strange play, then it seems evident that he is challenging his audience to come to their own conclusions. A determination of the Shakespearean teaching would, therefore, seem to be dependent on the questions that we ask of the play.

Our discussion of the play has concentrated on the three deliberative scenes. The reason for this is to elucidate the political philosophy that anchors the war. Yet there is another reason for this procedure; the deliberative scenes are the scenes of the polis, and following the procedure of the Republic, treating the city as the soul writ large, we may be able to discover a framework within which to understand Shakespeare's political teaching. This does not mean that a discussion of the regimes is not subject to the same problems elucidated in the dialogue; however, it is a basis for a beginning.[82]

In a discussion of A Midsummer Night's Dream, John Vyvyan notes Hippolyta's comment that the confusions of the night have grown "to something of great constancy." In answer to the question of what this thing of constancy is, Vyvyan answers, that it is beauty.[83] Vyvyan's argument hinges

on a reading of Shakespeare in light of the neo-Platonic influence of the Renaissance, thought of as the ascent of love to pure beauty. While A Midsummer Night's Dream is surely the antithesis of Troilus and Cressida, it is interesting to note the many appeals to constancy in the latter play. Troilus is pictured in the first scene as a divided man, the very figure of inconstant desires. Cressida is also divided on whether to be constant to her own understanding of the truth of love, or to give herself to Troilus and thus lose her feminine power. Constancy is brought into the political arena when Troilus demands that the hesitant Trojan council remain constant to their original decision. In the Greek camp, Agamemnon is inconstant, unsure whether the Greek enterprise should be dependent on the resolve of men or the whims of fortune. Achilles' inconstancy is delineated in his dialogue with Ulysses. He is not sure whether the demands of love or of nobility should order his decision. And in these vacillations Shakespeare reveals a most profound understanding of the passions that rule most men's souls.

For the ancient Greeks, questions of the noble and the beautiful were intertwined. This is evident in the fact that one word, kalos, could serve to designate both beauty and nobility. Troilus and Cressida is a play in which the major characters continually try to come to grips with kalos, in all the complexity that the classical term infers. Helen's beauty is itself sufficient reason to continue the war, while the grounds of nobility, whether it is autonomous or not, are debated throughout the play. It is in Troy that the questions of beauty and nobility are most prominent. The noble is not simply the idea of honour, yet it is in reference to honour that most discussion occurs.

Troilus speaks first of "the worth and honour of a great king" later declaring that Helen is "a theme of honour and renown." Late in the play Hector declares that "mine honour keeps the weather of my fate," implying that honour is the chief determinate of his life. (5.3.26) In the Greek camp Achilles declares that "Fortune and I are friends" but learns that Ajax will fight Hector and, in Patroclus' words, "perhaps receive great honour by him." (3.3.225)

The regime described in the Republic that corresponds most closely to Troy is timocracy. Socrates says that it is distinguished by "one thing alone" that is, in fact, a pair: "love of victories and of honours."[84] Yet, as Socrates shows, the timocratic man is an especially complex lover.[85] Hector is portrayed as both a lover of honour and a lover of victory; Troilus is a lover of speeches and of glory; Paris is the ultimate lover, a lover of honour and of beauty. Just as in the Republic where the honour of the timocratic man is complex due to his many loves, complex too is the honour presented in Troilus and Cressida because it means so many things to different people.

Nobility, in Renaissance thought, was the idea of virtue and moral worth, as well as the inheritance of noble blood. Honour was hence a component of nobility and not an equivalent. This is why the questioning of what constitutes honour implies a questioning of the status of nobility. When Troilus scorns Hector for measuring "the worth and honour of a great king ... with fears and reasons," he is asserting the autonomy of the noble, that it exists beyond the sphere of utilitarian calculation. Yet the ambiguous status of the noble in Troy is evident in the importance attached to questions of value. What does Troy value? In Troilus' opinion - constancy. That

constancy was considered as but one component of nobility is clear in Elyot's Boke Named the Gouverner, often ascribed by scholars as one of Shakespeare's sources for Troilus and Cressida.[86] Elyot states that "severity ... magnanimity ... constancy ... honour ... sapience ... continence ... do express or set out the figure of very nobility; which in the higher estate it is contained, the more excellent is the virtue in estimation."[87]

By this understanding, we see that Troilus' argument for the council's fidelity to their original decision is a plea to affirm their nobility. As Troilus' argument prevails, whether through Hector's acquiescence or not, we view the ascendancy of the timocratic ideal. Are we to think that the defeat of Troy is but the defeat of honourable ideals before the superior power of the Greeks? This is one reading of the play; however, there is evidence within the play itself that Shakespeare intended a more subtle critique of these youthful timocrats. Socrates states in the Republic that over time the timocratic man is likely to degenerate into a lover of wealth.[88] While this is but one of the many corollaries between Shakespeare's depiction of the Trojan regime and the Platonic commentary on timocracy, it seems particularly apt. We have already noted Troilus' uses of the language of commerce to describe both his desire for Cressida and the Greek response to the abduction of Helen.[89] The language of commerce is that of buying and selling, of acquisition and gain. While this perhaps reveals the inner nature of the timocratic soul, this propensity to acquire is not more striking than if we consider the abduction of Helen. The Trojan expedition to Sparta was conceived, as we are told, out of a desire to revenge themselves of the Greeks. Yet was not the end result of Paris' mission the replacement of one woman with another of greater value?

.....It was thought meet
Paris should do some vengeance on the Greeks;
.....
And for an old aunt whom the Greeks held captive
He brought a Grecian queen, whose youth and freshness
Wrinkles Apollo's and makes stale the morning.

(2.2.72-79)

It would seem that the romantic notion of the Trojan War is severely thrown into doubt with this one statement. When this is added to the comments of Diomedes and Thersites, we begin to see that for all its stress on noble deeds, the Trojan position is founded in common acquisitive longings. This is not to state that Shakespeare unequivocably condemns the Trojans. Part of the ambiguity of the play is that we are both repulsed by and attracted to both sides. Hector is surely the epitome of nobility and when Achilles orders his Myrmidons to slay him, he dies like a butchered animal, victim of a moral code that is not shared by his enemies. The irony of that final scene is, of course, the fact that Hector has laid down his weapons and is resting after chasing down and killing "one in sumptuous armor," as the stage direction puts it.

Perhaps this is the image of the play: the one in sumptuous armor reveals a putrified core. One last time Shakespeare brings forth the theme of appearance and reality in order to show the divergence between the two. The death of Hector should cause the auditor of the play to harken back to the scurrilous railing of Thersites and the simpering Pandarus for proof that something is amiss in a world that speaks so nobly of its ambitions while its heroes fall like cows before the butcher.

Yet we must keep in mind the moral quandary that has been presented to us. The Trojan War has begun out of a desire for revenge, but as Bacon aptly put it "revenge is a kind of wild justice."[90] In their desire to redress the insult to their honour that the kidnapping of Hesione effected, the Trojans have initiated a reciprocal Grecian desire for revenge. Helen is no longer an equivalent exchange for Hesione; due to her beauty her value is greater than that of Hesione. The possession of Helen is "a theme of honour and renown." Her defence has been symbolized into the raison d'etre of Troy; the service is greater than the god.

This is the Trojan paradox that Shakespeare presents to us. Our hypothesis that the survival of the polis is the primary concern is defeated by the rule of the lovers of honour. In their desire to win honour and glory, the idea of the common good is discarded. Troilus and Paris show by their speeches that they care nothing for politics. The pursuit of honour allows reason to be sundered from the good. The paradox being that the natural warrior, on whom the defence of the city rests, would risk the survival of the city for the sake of glory. The fate of Troy is sealed by a lack of political authority that can restrain the passions of the warrior with discipline and moderation. Although the situation differs, the end of Troy will come in that chaos prophecized in Ulysses' speech on degree.

As for the Greeks, Shakespeare presents another paradox of deficient regimes. If the problem of Troy is that reason has been sundered from the good in their political deliberations, the Grecian problem can be understood in light of the effects of sundering wisdom from reason. As Ulysses correctly observes, the rule of political authority has been eroded in the Greek camp.

His speech is a model of cool rationality, the ends of the expedition are never in doubt; there is no debate on the moral authority of their course. Only Thersites and Diomedes offer criticism of the war itself; Achilles' (and later Ajax's) rebellion originates in the strategic considerations that have caused the impetus of the war to falter. Reason is present in the Greek deliberations but, as Agamemnon and Nestor show us, it is a reason that would never dare, that would lie obedient to the shifting favors of fortune. Hence one paradox of the play is that Achilles, the Grecian lover of honour, is in rebellion against his commander, criticizing his strategic ineptitude. While the matter of Achilles' love for the Trojan Polyxena is one explanation for his recalcitrant behaviour, given his concern for reputation and honour, it is difficult to see this affair as "sufficient" reason to keep him from the war.

Our discussion has already noted the tinge of moral relativism within Ulysses' speech, and its subtle difference from the traditional Elizabethan world picture. It remains, by way of conclusion, to offer some thoughts on why Shakespeare presented Ulysses in this manner. On the one hand, we have yet another presentation of the 'wily Odysseus' of legend; however, what is particularly prescient in Shakespeare's presentation is just how much Ulysses epitomizes the Machiavellian position. Shakespeare appears to be saying that when political authority is weak, men like Ulysses will arise to fill the void. Cultivated and deferential, possessed of both political and cosmic vision, they nevertheless prosper through fraud, manipulation, and the creation of images. Unlike the Homeric Odysseus, Shakespeare's Ulysses is never once mentioned as a warrior, as possessing martial skill. He is crafty and devious, and most importantly, he is the power behind the throne. Indeed, his greatest image is the analogy of cosmos and polis that he presents to Agamemnon, an analogy that closer examination must reveal as false. The

planets do not "in evil mixture to disorder wander." But the image is striking and remains.

Hence, we might agree with the judgements of the critics who deem Troilus and Cressida to be "amazing and modern," although, perhaps not for the same reasons. It is difficult to simply view the play as anti-war. As we have seen the justifications to either abandon or to continue the war are complex. Shakespeare's critique of Trojan and Greek can be discovered in the reason that places honour over the good and reason over wisdom. The modernity of the play is revealed in the person of Ulysses. He might be best understood as a seventeenth century precursor of that particular phenomenon of the twentieth century: the professional politician. Ulysses, with his plots and stratagems, reflects our belief in the efficacy of reason and the malleability of man, that human action can be predicted and controlled; however, Shakespeare's final irony is to show that the mastery of fortune is not an exact science. As moderns, we tend to believe that all things can be logically explained, thus, when we confront a play like Troilus and Cressida, in which logic is either flawed or absent, we become confused and call it 'enigmatic'. The result of our assumptions are themselves predictable, as Frederick Kiefer has observed:

> Just as prevailing assumptions about the efficacy of reason shape our taste in popular literature, so too they color our reading of literature written long ago. Thus we tend to look for motives, rationales, causes. In reading tragedy we expect to find a direct connection between a person's deeds and his predicament; we look for foibles and seize upon "tragic errors"; we find most congenial the play that depicts the operation of retributive justice.[91]

Kiefer's point about retributive justice is particularly apt with respect to Troilus and Cressida. Shakespeare quite clearly describes the origins of the war in a desire for vengeance; the Greeks kidnap Hesione; the Trojans kidnap Helen; the Greeks beslege and exstinguish Troy. This is retribution in full; however, as the play points out, things are not quite this simple. To explain

the actions of the heroes is not something that can be easily accomplished; Shakespeare has imbued his Greeks and Trojans with all the complexities that attend human beings. We may see the war as the exemplification of a retributive justice but this cannot satisfactorily explain why the heroes fight and die. Shakespeare is equally critical of both Trojan and Greek, despite their many admirable qualities, any regime which overvalues honour, which divorces reason from the common good, or like the Greeks, overvalues reason and reduces it to instrumental technique, without any consideration of the wisdom to which reason should aspire is deficient. Yet nobility and wisdom remain the main foundations of a good regime, and in the play Shakespeare shows us the necessity of their presence in political life.

Notes

1 Plato, Republic, 377b.

2 Republic, 607b. Cf. Symposium, 205b., ff.

3 Leo Strauss, The City and Man, p. 134.

4 Aristotle, Poetics, 1451b.

5 Poetics, 1459a.

6 Stanley Rosen, Nihilism: A Philosophical Essay, p. xv-xvi, pp. 198-99.

7 There are many examples of the modern reaction against immorality in literature. Cf., for example, John Gardner, On Moral Fiction (a hesitant critique); Bryan Griffin, Panic Among the Philistines (an immoderate critique), and John W. Aldridge, The American Novel and the Way We Live Now (a reasoned analysis).

8 Leo Strauss, What is Political Philosophy, p. 10.

9 Stanley Rosen, Plato's Symposium, p. xxi.

10 This problem is explicated in some depth in Allan Bloom and Harry Jaffa's Shakespeare's Politics, pp. 1-12, in the introductory essay of John Alvis and Thomas West's Shakespeare as Political Thinker, and Howard B. White's Copp'd Hills Towards Heaven.

11 Rousseau, "Letter to M. D'Alembert on the Theatre.", passim.

12 Allan Bloom in the introduction to his translation of Rousseau's "Letter" in Politics and the Arts, p. xxiii.

13 Alfred Harbage, As They Liked It, p. ix.

14 The judgements of "philosophical" and "modern" are to be found in many interpretations. For examples, cf. Jan Kott's essay on Troilus and Cressida in Shakespeare Our Contemporary, Virgil Whittaker in his introduction to the Pelican Shakespeare, p. 979; L.C. Knights, Scrutiny, 18, 1964, pp. 145-46, and Bernard Shaw in The Shaw Review, 7, 1964.

15 The history of the play is detailed in Bernard Beckerman's "History of the Play" in the Festival Shakespeare edition of Troilus and Cressida, pp. 4-22.

16 Algernon Swinburne, A Study of Shakespeare, p. 201.

17 Preface to Troilus and Cressida, lines 18-21. This is from the Oxford Shakespeare edition of the play, edited by Kenneth Muir. All further references will be from this excellent edition.

18 Some examples of these genre definitions are Campbell's "comical satire", Tllyard's "problem play", Muir's "tragical satire", Foakes' "heroic farce", Kaufmann's "tragi-comedy" and "black comedy", and Harbage's "classical chronicle." Anyone who attempts to define the play would be advised to heed the words of Polonius in Hamlet, 2.2.386-391.

19 T.S. Eliot, in Selected Essays, p. 17. Frank Kermode, "On Shakespeare's Learning", p.5.

20 Erasmus, Opera Omnia I. 19, as quoted by Joel Altman in The Tudor Play of Mind, p. 206.

21 John Vyvyan, Shakespeare and Platonic Beauty, p. 14.

22 The other prologues are in Romeo and Juliet, Henry V, Henry VI, Part II, Pericles, and Henry VIII.

23 Aristotle, Rhetoric, 1258b.

24 The Tudor fascination for the possibilities of rhetoric and its relation to Shakespeare's drama is discussed in MacDonald's The Rhetoric of Tragedy, Kennedy's The Oration in Shakespeare, and most especially in Altman's The Tudor Play of Mind.

25 Plato, Gorgias, 521d.

26 If this is true, then one must consider the problem of value in light of the play as a whole. There is, as well, the problem of the esoteric/exoteric in the plays. On this Vyvyan, p. 14. Cf. also White, Antiquity Forgot, p. 5.

27 See Shakespeare's Opening Scenes, Robert F. Willson, pp. 1-12. For an example of this importance, cf. Jaffa's "The Limits of Politics: An Interpretation of King Lear, Act I, sc. i" in Shakespeare's Politics, Bloom and Jaffa, pp. 113-145.

28 Cf. Iliad, I.11; Troilus, 3.3.1-16.

29 Consider the relation between duty and shame. Cf. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1116a.

30 This suggests that Shakespeare's use of the word 'quarrel' in the Prologue is ironic. The Montagues and Capulets can be reconciled, albeit in a politically ordered and expedient manner, while the natural enemies of Greek and Trojan cannot.

31 Cf. 4.5.110-112.

32 Strauss, City and Man, p. 6.

33 Plato, Republic, 403a.

34 Republic, 462a-c.

35 George Gilder, Sexual Suicide, p. 84.

36 Gilder, p. 84.

37 Clizia, in The Comedies of Machiavelli, edited and translated by David Sices and James B. Atkinson, p. 299. With this in mind, it is interesting to consider "the only definition of love worthy of a philosopher," namely Nietzsche's: "In its means, war; at bottom the mortal hatred of the sexes." Ecce Homo, "Why I Write Such Good Books," 5.

38 It is this scene, more than any other, that has earned the play the description of "philosophical". There are only three such scenes in the play: The degree speech, the Trojan council scene, and Ulysses' dialogue with Achilles. It is interesting that they occupy a mere 534 lines out of the play's total of 3326. This is a mere 18% of the play; their terseness is in direct proportion to their importance.

39 Agamemnon's words echo Augustine. Cf. The City of God, IV.xxviii. Cf. also Alvis' provocative note in his essay on the play in Shakespeare As Political Thinker, p. 133, note 6.

40 Machiavelli, The Prince, translated by Harvey C. Mansfield, Chapter XXV, pp. 98-99. Cf. Thomas Flanagan's essay "The Concept of Fortuna in Machiavelli" in The Political Calculus: Essays on Machiavelli's Political Philosophy, edited by Anthony Parel, pp. 127-156. Cf. also Fortune and Elizabethan Tragedy by Frederick Keifer, introduction and conclusion, pp. xv-xiii, pp. 334-338.

41 Machiavelli, The Prince, Chapter XXV, p. 99.

42 Plato, Republic, 473c.

43 Aristotle, Rhetoric, 1358b9.

44 On Tudor cosmology, see Francis Johnson, Astronomical Thought in the Renaissance; Jacob Klein, "The Copernican Revolution" in The St. John's Review, Jan. 1979. For the sun-king correspondence cf. Ernest Kantorwicz The King's Two Bodies, chapter 2, with S.K. Heninger's Touches of Sweet Harmony, p. 346.

45 Muir's intelligent note on the variant readings of "recides" and "resides" (1.3.116) should end the speculation that has attended the precise relation of justice, force, and right in this passage. Cf. his note 116, p. 73 in his edition of the play.

46 David Lowenthal, "Shakespeare's Caesar's Plan." Interpretation, v. 10, numbers 2 and 3, p. 249.

47 E.M.W. Tillyard, The Elizabethan World Picture, pp. 18-19.

48 Tillyard, p. 19.

49 Virgil Whitaker, p. 979 of The Pelican Shakespeare.

50 The question here is not whether Shakespeare ever read Machiavelli, but whether Ulysses' statements reflect a Machiavellan understanding of politics. For Machiavelli and Shakespeare, cf. Tracy Strong, "Shakespeare: Elizabethan Statecraft and Machiavellianism" in The Artist and Political Vision, ed. Barber and MacGrath, pp. 193-220. For a cautionary reading of Machiavelli and Shakespeare cf. David Lowenthal, "The New Shakespearians" in The Claremont Review, Vol III, No. 2, May 1984.

51 Cf. Republic, 459c-460b.

52 Aristotle, Ethics, 1123b.

53 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discours sur la vertu du heroes", as quoted in D'Amour, Aristotle On Heroes, p. 8.

54 Cf. 1.3.323; 2.1.96.-7; 2.3.59; and 4.1.305-6.

55 Modern echoes of this can be seen in the refusal of the Allied powers in World War II to discuss a conditional German surrender once they had gained the strategic advantage. cf. Winston Churchill The Second World War, V.4, pp. 684-691.

56 Thucydides, 5.85-116.

57 Aristotle, Politics, 1281a; Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, Ch. XVII.

58 Rosen, Nihilism, p.xv.

59 Interestingly, Helenus - in his only speech in the play - does not refer to piety, the gods, or prayer, only to being ruled by reason.

60 J.V. Cunningham, Woe or Wonder, p. 22. Note that Cunningham is not talking about Troilus here.

61 Cunningham, p. 22.

62 Cf. Plato, Hippias Major, 287e-289b. Asked by Socrates to give an example of beauty, Hippias suggests a beautiful maiden is beautiful; Socrates then asks if a beautiful maiden would not be ugly if compared with a god.

63 The commercial attitude toward the war can be discovered as far back as Thucydides, cf. 1.7-11.

64 Here again, the power of the ubiquitous Apollo can be discerned. Like Daphne, whose name Troilus invoked in the hope for divine assistance in his quest for Cressida, Cassandra received her cruel gift when she also spurned the love of Apollo.

65 Although Priam's comment is perceptive, it does not do anything to offset the lack of leadership he represents. He has no real role in the play, speaking only three times. This ineffectuality was well represented in the recent BBC television production of the play in which Priam was portrayed as a quasi-senile and doddering old man. Interestingly, in the same broadcast, Agamemnon was never without a flagon of wine.

66 Aristotle, Ethics, 1094b-1095a.

67 Psalms 58.4: "Their poison is like the poison of a serpent; they are like the deaf adder that stoppeth the ear."

68 Julius Caesar; cf. 3.2.12-61 with 3.2.73-252.

69 Gorgias, 502d-e.

70 This is partially problematic since we do not usually conceive of marriage as a natural arrangement. Indeed, the marriage ceremony is itself society's sanctification by conventions of the union. Yet the union of men and women is not merely conventional but also seems to be in the natural order of things, which, perhaps, reveals the true general relationship of nature and convention - not opposition, but that one serves to augment or complete the other.

71 The greatest irony, of course, is that this is precisely what has happened.

72 John Kiefer, in "Mythos and Logos" in Essays in Honor of Jacob Klein intelligently explicates these relationships.

73 Muir, pp. 32-33 of his introduction to the play.

74 For 'cherubim' cf. The Oxford English Dictionary, V.II, pp. 325-6.

75 Cf. Aristotle, Ethics 11151; ". . . plainly the things we fear are terrible things, and these are, to speak without qualification, evils; for which reason people even define fear as an expectation of evil." Cf. also, Hobbes's Leviathan part 1, ch. 6.

76 Muir, Troilus and Cressida, note 78, p. 117.

77 For an older view of the play consider Goethe's comment: "Hamlet is Shakespeare's best acting play . . . but would you see his mind unfettered, read Troilus and Cressida. Consider also, Macauley; "Troilus and Cressida is perhaps of all the plays of Shakespeare that which is commonly considered as the most incorrect. Yet it seems to us infinitely more correct, in the sound sense of that term, than what are called the most correct plays of the most correct dramatists."

78 Arnold Stein, "Troilus and Cressida: The Disjunctive Imagination" in English Literary History, XXXVI, March 1969, p.167; Una Ellis-Fermor, Frontiers of Drama, pp. 56-7;

79 T, McAlindon, 'Language, Style, and Meaning in Troilus and Cressida, PMLA, 84 (1969), p.29.

80 Joel Altman, The Tudor Play of Mind.

81 G. Wilson Knight in The Wheel of Fire argues the Trojan bias of Shakespeare. Note pp. 44-48 especially.

82 As Allan Bloom notes in his "Interpretive Essay" of his translation of the Republic: "Socrates and Adeimantus discuss each of the regimes before they discuss the man corresponding to it. Therefore, they have the tendency . . . to see in the man what they saw in the city. This predetermines the somewhat questionable result that men have the same rank order of goodness which was found in regimes." p. 417; cf. also p. 372; p. 378; p. 412.

83 Vyvyan, p.7.

84 Republic 548c.

85 The timocratic man "is not distinguished merely by a pair of loves, but by a whole constellation of loves. First mentioned is his love of victory (philonikia), followed by a love of music (philomousia), love of listening (philekoia), love of ruling (philarchia), love of honor (philotimia), love of gymnastic (philogymnasia), and finally love of hunting (philotheria)." From "The War Lover: A Study of Plato's Republic" by Leon H. Craig, paper presented to the Canadian Political Science Association annual meeting, June 6-8, 1986.

86 The sources of the degree speech are enumerated in the appendix to the Variorum Shakespeare edition of the play.

87 Thomas Elyot, The Book Named The Governer, I.XXI, p. 78. For some striking similarities to Ulysses' degree speech, cf. I.1. Cf. Shakespeare and the Renaissance Concept of Honor by Curtis Brown Watson, and Alice Shalavi, The Relationship of Renaissance Concepts of Honor to Shakepeare's Problem Plays for discussions on the relationship of nobility and honour in the Renaissance.

88 Plato, Republic, 549b.

89 Cf. also Paris' response to Diomedes, 4.1.76-79:

Fair Diomed, you do as chapmen do,
Dispraise the thing that you desire to buy;
But we in silence hold this virtue well,
We'll not command what we intend to sell.

90 Francis Bacon, "Of Revenge" in Essays Civil and Moral, No. 4, p. 6.

91 Frederick Kiefer, Fortune and Elizabethan Tragedy, p. 336.

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